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Engaging a Multigenerational Workforce

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College of Management and Technology

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Schnarda Robinson

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Engaging a Multigenerational Workforce

by

Schnarda R. Robinson

MBA, University of Phoenix, 2007

BB, Western Illinois University, 2000

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2017

Abstract

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management reported the productivity levels of the American multigenerational workforce decreasing as leaders strive to actively engage employees to improve organizational output. The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore what leadership strategies federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce. The conceptual framework consisted of Kahn's employee engagement theory and Strauss and Howe's generational cohort theory. The sample consisted of 3 federal government managers within metro Atlanta, Georgia who had successfully managed a multigenerational workforce, demonstrated through the feedback they received from their employees. Data were collected using face-to-face semistructured interviews and a review and analysis of company documents. Data analysis consisted of applying Yin's 5 step data analysis process, and member checking and methodological triangulation of the data strengthened the trustworthiness of interpretations. Emergent themes included generational differences; strategies for working with multigenerational differences; and strategies for engaging a multigenerational workforce. The most effective strategies involved training, communication skills, and team building. Findings from this study may contribute to social change by providing federal government managers with the framework for understanding and engaging its multigenerational workforce, which can result in promoting positive relationships between coworkers, families, and communities. Positive relationships in the workforce may increase employee morale and motivation and decrease employee turnover and the unemployment rate.

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Dedication

I would first like to give all thanks and praises to my God and my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Without His guidance, mercy, grace, kindness, love, and faithfulness none of this would be possible! I dedicate this accomplishment to my mother, Shirley Robinson; my grandmother, Mamie Burrel; and my grandfather, Louis Burrel Sr., who are smiling down from heaven. My mother instilled the importance of a good education and how far you can go with one. My grandmother demonstrated the significance of having faith and that God provides. Both of these women were the epitome of strong, black women who endured and overcame many obstacles. I will forever be grateful for the life lessons they taught me. I dedicate this accomplishment to God's gifts to me, Samaria and Saniya Robinson. I am truly grateful God saw fit to bless me with two wonderful, intelligent, talented daughters. He has entrusted me with such a responsibility and for that, I will forever be thankful. They have provided me with the motivation, inspiration, and love to successfully complete this program. As a single parent, I wanted to demonstrate the importance of accomplishing your goals. By successfully following through with this degree, I have done just that. I wanted to be the example so many others talk about. I wasn't just talking the talk, I was walking the walk!

With God ALL things are possible (Matthew 19:26). I can do ALL things through Christ, who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13). For with God, nothing shall be impossible (Luke 1:37).

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my friends and family, whether it was a kind word, a listening ear, prayers, or whatever form of support you have provided me with during this journey, I thank you from the bottom of my heart! To my siblings (Selena, Stacie, and JR), nieces and nephews, I hope I have made you all proud! I love you all!

To my chair, Dr. Patricia Fusch, thank you for the guidance you provided during this journey. To my second chair, Dr. Janet Booker, and my URR, Dr. Patsy Kasen, thank you for your expertise. Thank you, Dr. Freda Turner, for your assistance throughout this journey. I would like to acknowledge my classmates, especially the smaller groups in the 8100 and 9000 courses. Although we may have been at different points, the advice and encouragement that you all provided throughout this journey are priceless. You all will forever hold a special place in my heart.

To my church family at Greenforest Community Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia, I have learned so much over these past 16 years. My faith has grown because of that. To my choir family, Voices of Inspiration, we have praised and worshiped God together, prayed together, cried together, laughed together, fellowshipped together, etc. Thank you for the unconditional love you have given the girls and me over the years. I love you all. God truly places people in your life for a reason, a season, a lifetime.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Different generations comprise today's workforce; each generation has the potential to contribute to organizational success or failure (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014). The knowledge of factors affecting how each generation performs is essential for success (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). Low morale and motivation are two factors that can have a negative impact on an organization's success (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Understanding the multigenerational workforce and the specific leadership styles associated with them can improve an organization's performance and increase employees' productivity (Cates, Cojanu, & Pettine, 2013), as well as understanding the multigenerational workforce and their motivational elements (Islam & Ahmed, 2014; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). My exploration of concepts including leadership styles, motivational elements, employee turnover, and different and specific generations are pertinent to this research. These factors are the basis for strategies managers use to engage their multigenerational workforce. In this study I will explore strategies managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce.

Background of the Problem

From 2012 to approximately 2026, the workforce will consist of four generations (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014; Berk, 2013). The combination of different generations in the workforce can create challenges for organizations (Coulter & Faulkner, 2013; Mencl & Lester, 2014). Adjusting to the various needs of their employees is a challenge management faces (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Srinivasan, 2012). Managers should possess flexibility when managing a workforce of different generations (Millar & Lockett, 2014). A multigenerational workforce can have similarities between the generations. Each generation knows they are working toward a common goal and will need one another's help to complete the goal (Bennett et al., 2012). A multigenerational workforce can have differences between the generations as well. Each generation requires a different leadership style to aid them in accomplishing that common goal (Becton et al., 2014). Flexibility will allow the managers to adapt to the similarities and differences the generations possess.

It is management's responsibility to exhibit flexibility to yield positive results with managing a multigenerational workforce (Cates et al., 2013; Eversole, Venneberg, & Crowder, 2102; Millar & Lockett, 2014). Employees within the multigenerational workforce will have to display some flexibility working with their peers to foster a positive work environment (Gursoy, Chi, & Karadag, 2013; Murray, 2013). Management might have the ability to lead a more productive and cooperative workforce by obtaining the knowledge of the various generations.

Problem Statement

The federal government employs approximately 2,067,643 workers who represent four generations (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2016). The multigenerational workforce is creating challenges for managers that can decrease productivity (Lester, Standifer, Schultz, & Windsor, 2012). The general business problem is that some managers lack an understanding of the effect a multigenerational workforce can have in the workplace. The specific business problem is some federal government managers lack leadership strategies to engage a multigenerational workforce in enhancing productivity.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study is to explore what leadership strategies federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce. Three federal government managers within the metro Atlanta, Georgia, will participate in this study to share their strategies to engage their multigenerational workforce. The implications for social change from this study may include the potential to increase employee morale and motivation by engaging them thus decreasing employee turnover and potentially the unemployment rate. Low morale and motivation have the potential to cause employees to leave an organization (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Employee turnover can contribute to the unemployment rate if the employee spends any time not working upon leaving the organization. Federal government managers may also obtain the framework for understanding its multigenerational workforce by encouraging a positive work relationship that may affect and improve relationships employees have with their coworkers, families, and communities. It is possible if an employee is having difficulty at work, those difficulties could affect the employee's life outside of the workplace. Employees want to feel understood. A reduction in negative discussions regarding the employees' managers and organization to others may occur if managers encourage a positive work relationship.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods available for consideration include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The quantitative research method consists primarily of statistical data (Muskat, Blackman, & Muskat, 2012) and hypotheses testing (Bansal & Corley, 2012). Statistical data and hypotheses testing will not occur within the study. Mixed methods allow for a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research (Muskat et al., 2012). I will not use a combination of the two methods within the study. The qualitative research method is the best selection for the exploration of meanings and experiences regarding a problem or issue (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The qualitative method is the appropriate selection for this study due to the exploration of strategies federal government managers use to engage their multigenerational workforce to improve performance and increase productivity.

Four research designs I considered associated with qualitative method include ethnography, narrative, phenomenology, and case study. Ethnography entails research based on cultural characteristics of a group (Hunt, 2014). In this study, the study of cultural characteristics will not occur. Narrative design involves understanding the lives of participants and interpreting the meanings of participants' stories based on their experiences (Maria, 2015). Studying the lives of participants and interpreting the meanings will not occur in this study. Phenomenological design entails the exploration of shared experiences and understanding meanings of lived experiences of participants based on a phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Exploring and understanding shared and lived experiences of participants will not occur in this study. When attempting to explore participants' experiences and perspectives within a real life setting, researchers should use exploratory case study design (Yin, 2014). The preferred research design to explore strategies federal government managers use to enhance their multigenerational workforce is the single exploratory case study design.

Research Question

The research question for this study is: What leadership strategies do federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce to enhance productivity?

Interview Questions

1. Would you classify yourself as a Traditionalist (1922 - 1944), Baby Boomer (1945 - 1964), Generation Xer (1965 - 1980), or Millennial (1981 – 2000)?
2. What challenges have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
3. What strategies have you implemented to overcome these challenges?
4. What generational differences have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
5. What organizational strategies have you implemented as a result of generational differences?
6. What organizational strategies has your organization implemented as a result of generational differences?

7. What strategies have you implemented that engage your multigenerational workforce?
8. Is there anything else you would like to include that you and I have not discussed?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this doctoral study is twofold. The primary theory is employee engagement founded by Kahn (1990). Kahn measures the engagement or disengagement level of employees through their level of commitment to their organization's goals, which is the premise of the employee engagement theory. Engagement occurs when employees are actively involved physically, cognitively, and emotionally within their duties at work (Kahn, 1990). Disengagement occurs when employees withdraw themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally within their duties at work (Kahn, 1990). The use of this theory may provide an understanding regarding employee engagement. An exploration of strategies federal government managers uses to engage workers to ensure higher levels of productivity will occur to support this theory.

The secondary theory is generational cohort theory. As the name implies it is the study of generational cohorts, also referred to as generations. Theorists Strauss and Howe (1991) were the founders of generational cohort theory. The premise of this theory is individuals (generations) born during a similar period in time (generational cycle) will develop commonalities in values and beliefs (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Strauss and Howe (1991) posited a generational cycle, or saeculum, results in a change in the values and attitudes of those individuals born within that cycle. Each saeculum has four phases called turnings; a new generation is born during each turning (Strauss & Howe, 1991). The use of this theory may provide an understanding regarding generational differences within a multigenerational workforce. The use of this theory may also provide managers with strategies they may need to incorporate within their day-to-day managing duties.

Operational Definitions

This subsection consists of the definitions of key terminology to assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of the terms. The key terms and definitions include the following:

Baby Boomer: The Baby Boomers were born from 1945 to 1964 (Becton et al., 2014; Gursoy et al., 2013).

Employee engagement: An employee's level of commitment to accomplishing their organization's goals (Kahn, 1990).

Generation X: The Generation Xers were born from 1965 to 1980 (Cates et al., 2013; Gursoy et al., 2013).

Generation Y (Millennials): The Millennials were born from 1981 to 2000 (Anantatmula & Shrivastar, 2012; Becton et al., 2014; Gursoy et al., 2013).

Traditionalist: Traditionalists, also called Veterans, were born from 1922 to1944 (Cekada, 2012: Gursoy et al., 2013).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are details assumed true but not verified (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). One assumption is participants will provide accurate and truthful responses during the interview process. I will brief the participants on the purpose of the study and what the study entails, including the level of confidentiality that exists. Another assumption is the participants will remain open, honest, and cooperative throughout the process with the disclosure.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The first limitation is the socioeconomic backgrounds of the participants. Differences in income, education, and occupation could affect their decisions in the workforce and responses during the interview. A second limitation is the ethnic backgrounds of the participants. Different ethnic backgrounds may have encountered different experiences in their upbringing that may affect their decisions in the workforce and responses during the interview. A third limitation is the gender of the participants. Men and women may endure different experiences resulting in answers reflecting those experiences. A fourth limitation is the participants' length of service (number of years worked) could affect their perception of the other generations. The older generations may have more years of service and experience working with other generations than the younger generations (Becton et al., 2014).

Delimitations

Delimitations are elements that bound the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The delimitations of this study exist within the population and location. Federal government managers who work within metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia is a delimitation because they do not encompass all managers. Three federal government managers within one organization is a delimitation because they are not indicative of managers of all federal agencies or organizations.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

From 2012 to approximately 2026, different generations comprise and will continue to comprise the workforce. Organizational failure to address issues related to generational differences may have an impact on the leadership and success of the organization (Becton et al., 2014). Generational differences are a direct result of the composition of the workforce. A multigenerational workforce requires a variety of leadership styles and motivational elements to improve its performance and increase its productivity (Cates et al., 2013; Islam & Ahmed, 2014; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Improvement of morale, efficiency, and productivity requires successful management of each generation’s differences (Rajput, Marwah, Balli, & Gupta, 2013). Potential changes to accommodate the continual growth of the multigenerational workforce may need exploring, with the implementation of possible solutions following. Understanding the multigenerational workforce and the specific leadership styles and motivational elements associated with them may improve organizational performance and productivity.

Implications for Social Change

This study may improve social change by providing managers with the framework to better understand their multigenerational workforce. This understanding may encourage a positive work relationship that may affect and improve the relationship with their coworkers, families, and communities. There is a possibility employees may reduce the amount of negative talk regarding their managers and organization to other coworkers, their families, and members of the community if employees feel others understand them. Positive social change may include the potential to increase employee morale and motivation by engaging them thus decreasing employee turnover and potentially the unemployment rate. Low morale and motivation may have the potential to cause employees to leave an organization. This action could contribute to the unemployment rate if the employee spends any time not working upon leaving the organization.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this proposed qualitative case study was to explore leadership strategies federal government managers may use to engage a multigenerational workforce. The multigenerational workforce consists of four generations comprised of 33,462 Traditionalists, 545,939 Baby Boomers, 1,113,425 Generation Xers, and 374,817 Generation Yers (Millennials) working within the federal government (U.S. Office of

Personnel Management, 2016). Lyons and Kuron (2014) and Srinivasan (2012) posited this combination of different generations could create challenges for organizations. Managers will have to exhibit flexibility when managing a workforce of different generations (Millar & Lockett, 2014). Becton et al. (2014) believed each generation requires a different leadership style to yield positive results. Managers and employees may be more productive and cooperative by obtaining the knowledge of the various generations.

The conceptual framework for this study is twofold. The primary theory is employee engagement. The secondary theory is generational cohort theory. I will conduct an exploration of generational differences, leadership styles, job satisfaction, motivational elements, and employee turnover. Organization of the literature review is according to those previously mentioned topics.

Walden's Library Internet was my primary source of researching information. The examination of several databases contributed to the finding of peer-reviewed articles and sources including ABI/Inform Complete, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost, Emerald, ProQuest, and SAGE. I also created an alert within Google Scholar for articles related to my topic. Search terms for the databases and Google Scholar included *Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Millennials, different generations, multigenerational workforce, multigeneration(s), leadership theories, leadership styles, motivational elements, job satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and employee turnover.* I also used combinations of the previously mentioned search terms *i.e. multigenerational workforce and motivational elements, different generations and leadership styles, leadership styles and job satisfaction, leadership styles* and *employee turnover*. Out of 191 references, 98% are peer reviewed and 86% are within 5 years of my anticipated graduation date - 2013 to 2017. There were 125 peer reviewed articles and one government website used for this literature review. The remaining four articles were not peer reviewed.

Employee Engagement Theory

The founder of the primary theory, employee engagement theory, which is the understanding of employee engagement from a behavioral aspect, is Kahn (1990). The premise of the employee engagement theory is the measurement of the engagement or disengagement of employees through their level of commitment to accomplish the organization's goals. Employee engagement occurs when employees are actively involved physically, cognitively, and emotionally within their work duties and responsibilities (Kahn, 1990). Disengagement occurs when employees withdraw themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally within work duties and responsibilities (Kahn, 1990).

There are a number of definitions for employee engagement that are relevant to Kahn's definition. Employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement an employee displays toward their organization (Anitha, 2014). Schaufeli (2012) defined employee engagement as the affective and continuance commitments of a employee's extra role behavior. The more an employee is emotionally atttached to an organization, the longer the employee will stay thus exhibiting a behavior that promotes the functionality of the organization (Schaufeli, 2012).

The perception of how employees view themselves, their work, and the organization are determining factors of their level of engagement (Kahn, 1990). An employee with a positive perception will have a high level of engagement, thus performing their duties with an eagerness (Kahn, 1990). An engaged employee is motivating, will accomplish the organization's goals, and seek to assist others in completing tasks (Anitha, 2014; Kahn, 1990). An engaged employee strives for excellence and encourage to do the same (Anitha, 2014).

An employee with a negative perception will have a low level of engagement, thus performing their duties with hesitation (Kahn, 1990). A disengaged employee is defensive, will not accomplish goals, and will not volunteer to assist others in completing tasks (Anitha, 2014; Kahn, 1990). A disengaged employee will not concern themselves with their quality of work not the quality of work that is due from others (Anitha, 2014).

Employee engagement theory in conjunction with social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) determined whether a relationship existed between the theories. The premise of social exchange theory is people make social decisions based on perceived costs and benefits (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Another premise is that relationships evolve over time resulting in a development of trust, loyalty, and commitment due to expectations of reciprocity (Saks & Gruman, 2014b). Employees want something in return for doing something.

Generational Cohort Theory

The founders of generational cohort theory are Strauss and Howe (1991). Generational cohort theory is differences in an individual's values, motivations, and beliefs are a result of the social and political events that occurred in a particular period in history (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Generational cohort theorists posit that individuals (generations) born during a similar time period (generational cycle) develop commonalities in values and beliefs (Strauss & Howe, 1991). These commonalities are what drive each cycle, which varies from the previous cycle, the parental cycle (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Generational cohort theory exists when there is an age similarity and the impact of a period of time in one's upbringing is similar in nature (Chi, Maier, & Gursoy, 2013; Guillot-Soulez & Souez, 2014; Strauss & Howe, 1991). Those individuals living during a similar period in time result in sharing a similarity of feelings, thoughts, and actions (Chi et al., 2013). Work values, preferences, expectations, perceptions, and behaviors of each generation are similar in nature due to the period of time of their upbringing (Kian, Yusoff, & Rajah, 2013). Occurrences or happenings during that period in time are what form that particular generation's commonalities in perspectives, values, beliefs, and roles in society (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

Generational cohort theory in conjunction with organizational commitment theory (Jones, 2014) and psychological contracts theory (McDermott, Conway, Rousseau, & Flood, 2013) determined whether a relationship existed between the theories. Organizational commitment theory is a social exchange of resources and relationships between employees and organizations which impact an employee's sense of dedication to an organization (Jones, 2014). An employee's sense of dedication has an impact on their job performance and job satisfaction, which are elements of organizational commitment, and believed employees in different generational cohorts may have a different level of commitment (Jones, 2014).

Psychological contracts theory is the relationship between an employer and its employees with expectations that an exchange will occur as a result of the relationship (McDermott et al., 2013). An exchange includes training, professional development job security, compensation, and work-life balance (Andrews, Kacmar, & Kacmar, 2015; Linden, 2015). The psychological contract does not exist when an exchange does not occur (Andrews et al., 2015). Psychological contracts theory can play a role in job expectations and increase employees' commitment to their organization (Linden, 2015).

Generations

The generational cohort theory defines how each generation came into existence through turnings in a saeculum or generational cycle (Strauss & Howe, 1991). The four generations that are present within today's workforce as a result of the last four turnings consist of the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Generation Yers or Millennials (Strauss & Howe, 1991). A discussion of the events that occur during each generation's turning, in addition to characteristics of its personality, perspectives, values, and beliefs will occur in further detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Traditionalists. Born from 1922 and 1944, Traditionalists lived through World War II, which was an influential life experience that challenged families and the economy (Cekada, 2012). Those challenges made them into hard working, financially savvy individuals (Cekada, 2012). This generation believes that loyalty to an organization is important (Cates et al., 2013). They desire to stay with one company as opposed to moving around from company to company (Ferri-Reed, 2013). This generation believes dedication and sacrifice one contributes to the organization will get them to the level of success they desire (Cates et al., 2013). Traditionalists respect authority and are obedient by adhering to the rules and regulations of the organization (Lakshmi, Jampala, & Dokk, 2013; Putre, 2013). This generation is a team player and believes work comes before play (Hernaus & Poloski-Vokic, 2014). Traditionalists wear formal business attire to the office; require personal contact as opposed to telephone, email, and text; and prefer to use a library for research as opposed to the internet (Lester et al., 2012).

Baby Boomers. Born from 1945 to 1964, Baby Boomers faced life after the challenges of World War II (Gentry, Griggs, Deal, Mondore, & Cox, 2011). This generation grew up in households where the mother stayed at home, the father worked, and exposure to crime and violence was minimal (Chi et al., 2013). Baby Boomers are team-oriented and very optimistic (Hernaus & Poloski-Vokic, 2014). They are uncomfortable dealing with conflict, and it shows in their sensitivity level when receiving feedback (Putre, 2013). Baby Boomers thrive on personal growth (Chi et al., 2013). This generation wears dressy business casual attire to the office (Lester et al., 2012). They believe in working long hours to get the job done (Lakshmi et al., 2013). They prefer telephone calls and some personal contact as opposed to emails and texts (Heng & Yazdanifard, 2013; Lakshmi et al., 2013; Lester et al., 2012). Baby Boomers will search the internet if required but prefer to use the library as their primary source for research (Lester et al., 2012). This generation prefers to build a perfect career and excel in it (Chi et al., 2013; Ferri-Reed, 2013). Baby Boomers have a higher job satisfaction and commitment than the other generations (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). This generation has a lower willingness to quit than the other generations, which is a result of their sense of loyalty to an organization (Chi et al., 2013; Lu & Gursoy, 2016).

Generation Xers. Born from 1965 and 1980 and raised by two working parents, Generation Xers lived during the onset of crime and violence (Chi et al., 2013). Often referred to as latchkey kids, Generation Xers arrived home from school before their parents (Lakshmi et al., 2013). Very aware of the sacrifices their parents made, Generation Xers developed into the goal oriented, self-reliant individuals they are today (Lewis & Wescott, 2017). This generation seeks out training opportunities to better themselves (Chi et al., 2013). Although they exhibit impatience, they maintain a positive attitude as they multitask throughout their day. Generation Xers prefer an informal work environment with flexible hours, thus requiring a work-life balance (Lakshmi et al., 2013). They thrive on having the ability of doing things their way and will question authority without hesitation (Ferri-Reed, 2013). This generation is very techno literate (Ferri-Reed, 2013). Generation Xers believe in work-life balance and believe a job is just a job (Chi et al., 2013; Ferri-Reed, 2013; Gilley, Waddell, Hall, Jackson, & Gilley, 2015). Generation Xers wear informal business casual attire to work and often prefer to work from home (Lester et al., 2012). This generation does have a desire to receive feedback (Chi et al., 2013). They would prefer to communicate via email, personal contact, telephone, or text (Heng & Yazdanifard, 2013; Lester et al., 2012).

Millennials (Generation Yers). Born from 1981 to 2000, the Millennials (also known as Generation Yers) received excessive nurturing from both parents (Özçelik, 2015). This generation is very confident and has street smarts (Berk, 2013). The Millennials have a great sense of sociability, diversity, and tenacity (Chi et al., 2013; Rajput et al., 2013). While this generation is very technologically savvy (Ferri-Reed, 2015), they lack the skills to deal with difficult people (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014; Hernaus & Poloski Vokic, 2014). Millennials require a good work environment and working relationships (Hernaus & Poloski Vokic, 2014; Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014). However, this generation does not stay with one organization for very long (Ferri-Reed, 2015; Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015; Patel, 2014). Viewing the instability with the job market and the layoffs organizations impose contributes to the lack of organizational commitment (Özçelik, 2015). Millennials require flexibility and are great at multitasking (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014; Berk, 2013). Millennials wear any attire to the office they feel comfortable in and prefer to work from home (Lester et al., 2012). This generation desires a work-life balance due to the importance of their personal life (Branscum & Sciaraffa, 2013; Ferri-Reed, 2015; Gilley et al., 2015). Millennials require constant feedback and personal relationships on the job (Rajput et al., 2013). They communicate via emails, texts, and instant messaging as opposed to the telephone and email (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Heng & Yazdanifard, 2013; Lakshmi et al., 2013). Millennials thrive on their addiction to social media, blogs, and game systems (Gursoy et al., 2013).

Generational Differences

The multigenerational workforce can be rewarding for an organization. An organization can benefit from a multigenerational workforce due to the vast knowledge, creativity, and diversity that exists among the generations (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014; Edge, 2014; Murray, 2013). A multigenerational workforce has different values, attitudes, expectations, and insights (Lewis & Wescott, 2017; Schullery, 2013). While organizations may reap benefits from a multigenerational workforce, the manager is responsible for leading them. It is important for managers to recognize how they should lead the multigenerational employees due to differences that exist between the generations (Dhanapal et al., 2013; Murray, 2013; Patel, 2014). Managers may be able to develop effective strategies to lead their multigenerational workforce by acquiring this knowledge regarding the multigenerational workforce (Dhanapal et al., 2013; Schullery, 2013). This knowledge will come from knowing if a particular generation requires a specific leadership style and understanding what motivates the different generations (Coulter & Faulkner, 2014). Failure to recognize and acquire the knowledge can result in poor organizational performance and a less than favorable competitive advantage (Becton et al., 2014; Hillman, 2014; Riggs, 2013a). An organization’s failure to address issues related to generational differences may have a significant impact on the leadership and success of the organization (Becton et al., 2014; Hillman, 2014). Organizations must conduct adequate research to acquire the knowledge necessary to maintain its multigenerational workforce.

Acquiring knowledge of the different generations includes knowing if any similarities exist. Shared life experiences are contributing factors to the development of similarities in generations' attitudes and beliefs (Al-Asfour & Lettau, 2014). These similarities are contributing factors to what motivates the employees. While shared life experiences present similarities, differences in age can contribute to differences in work preferences (Amayah & Gedro, 2014; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Schullery, 2013). While researchers are defending their research documenting the existence of generational differences, there are other researchers arguing whether generational differences exist. The existence of any generational differences is the result of perception as opposed to reality (Dixon et al., 2013). One can interpret that to mean generational differences is a mindset. The existence of generational differences has become evident in the research conducted.

Generational differences ranged from job satisfaction and work ethic to status and money and several other factors (Gursoy et al., 2013; Hanson & Leuty, 2012; Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Boomers have higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and are less likely to quit than Generation Xers due to their work ethic, sense of job security, pay level satisfaction, and supervisor support (Hillman, 2014). Generational differences exist within status values and freedom work values. The older generations favored status values, which consists of having influence and responsibility within the workplace while younger generations favored freedom values, which included anything affecting work/life balance (Catania & Randall, 2013; Mencl & Lester, 2014). Millennials valued status and money more much than Generation Xers and Baby Boomers (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014). There were no significant differences with extrinsic, intrinsic, and social values (Acar, 2014). Extrinsic values were salary and bonuses, intrinsic values were non monetary items, and social values were workplace friendships (Catania & Randall, 2013; Kim & Park, 2014).

The existence of generational differences with respect to work values surfaced in research findings (Festing & Schafer, 2014; Gursoy et al., 2013). Generational differences existed with generational perspective on work (Hillman, 2014). Differences existed with work values and expectations for each generation (Jobe, 2014). Additional differences included Baby Boomers valued their job; Generation Xers were more likely to pursue managerial positions, and Millennials acted outside the norm and challenge management (Gursoy et al., 2013).

Work-life balance has become a frequently discussed topic within organizations. Generation Xers and Generation Yers thrive on work-life balance, as opposed to Baby Boomers and Traditionalists (Amayah & Gedro, 2014; Gilley et al., 2015). The two younger generations will not compromise their personal lives for the sake of the job (Amayah & Gedro, 2014). Millennials work ethic differs from the older generations

(Roodin & Mendelson, 2013; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Older generations have a more dedicated work ethic (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Older generations tend to stay with an employer longer than a younger generation, and younger generations may switch jobs every 2 years if a promotion does not occur (Lyons et al., 2015; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Based on the research conducted, differences in work values and work ethic exist between generations.

Motivating each generation requires obtaining knowledge on what motivates them. Differences in motivational elements exist between Millennials, Generation Xers and Baby Boomers (Hernaus & Poloski-Vokic, 2014; Özçelik, 2015). Workplace flexibility, work-life balance, continuous feedback and training/coaching on a regular basis motivate Millennials (Özçelik, 2015). Generation Xers value work-life balance as well, while Baby Boomers believe that their jobs are their purpose (Hernaus & Poloski-Vokic, 2014; Özçelik, 2015). Baby Boomers would be less likely to leave an organization and more inclined to follow the rules and regulations as opposed to Generation Xers and Millennials (Becton et al., 2014). Younger generations favored job mobility as opposed to older generations (Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015). Generation Xers were less likely to work overtime as opposed to Millennials and Baby Boomers due to their value of work-life balance (Becton et al., 2014). Millennials were more status conscious and motivated to spend money based on belonging to that status (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014). Based on the research conducted, different factors motivate each generation.

The majority of the researchers were able to document differences among the generations. Additional research conducted revealed very few or no generational difference exist. No generational difference existed with respect to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee turnover (Costanza et al., 2012). All generations desire intrinsic rewards (Acar, 2014). Gentry, Griggs, Deal, Mondore, and Cox (2011) revealed the presence of more similarities between generations and very few differences. Each generation wanted advancement opportunities and to feel appreciated (Gentry et al., 2011). Whether differences and similarities truly exist is dependent upon the research conducted.

Leadership Styles

Organizational leadership has a tremendous impact on the organization's success (Bradley-Geist & Landis, 2012; Cheok & O'Higgins, 2012; Lyons & Kuron, 2014). An organization's leadership can be the determining factor in whether an employee decides to stay or terminate their employment (Bradley-Geist & Landis, 2012; Cheok & O'Higgins, 2012). A manager's leadership style is indicative of how they interact with their employees (Bahreinian, Ahi, & Soltani, 2012) and the manager's choice of leadership style could very well affect the organization (Abualrub & Alghamdi, 2012; Lakshmi & Basha, 2013). Leadership styles can affect organizational sustainability (Metcalf & Benn, 2013) and organizational performance (Kara et al., 2013). It is important that a manager selects a leadership style that is effective, will improve performance, and increase productivity (Bahreinian et al., 2012; Lakshmi & Basha, 2013;

Murray, 2013). Acquiring knowledge of the different generations and their generational differences may aid managers in recognizing how they should lead their multigenerational employees and developing strategies to engage them (Dhanapal et al., 2013; Murray, 2013; Patel, 2014). An effective manager needs to obtain the knowledge necessary to manage a multigenerational workforce without allowing his/her generational preference to interfere (Dixon, Mercado, & Knowles, 2013).

Researchers mentioned several leadership styles in the literature regarding different generations. The leadership styles include transformational, transactional, authoritarian, charismatic, laissez faire, and participative. A more in depth discussion will follow.

Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is one of the oldest and most popular and effective leadership styles (Caillier, 2014). The founder of transformational leadership (originally transforming leadership) is Burns (1978). The expansion of Burns' discovery by Bass (1985) prompted the name transformational leadership. The primary philosophy of transformational leadership is managers and followers must work cohesively to increase morale and motivation (Burns, 1978). The expansion of Burns' philosophy by Bass (1985) consisted of how to measure transformational leadership and its impact on motivation and performance. Transformational managers provide employees with the necessary resources and inspiration to get the job completed (Bass, 1985). Managers within this leadership style thrive on developing their employees (Bass, 1985; Bass, Waldman, Avolio, & Bebb, 1987). Developing the needs of their employees has the potential for new approaches and problem solving (Burns, 1978). Transformational managers have very effective communication skills, which aid employees adhere to the vision (Bass, 1985; Bass et al., 1987; Raes et al., 2013; Schuh, Zhang, & Tian, 2013). By increasing morale and motivating their employees, transformational managers create a positive impact on their group (Bass, 1985). This level of inspiration exhibits higher levels of performance and satisfaction because the employees feel inspired and empowered to do their best (Bass, 1985; Cheok & O'Higgins, 2012). Transformational leaders have the ability to generate self-awareness, self-worth, and acceptance among their followers (Burns, 1978; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Encouraging and empowering employees will increase their determination level and commitment to the organization (Caillier, 2014). This atmosphere of cohesion is important to the success of the organization (Cheok & O'Higgins, 2012; Schuh et al., 2013). Transformational managers think more long term than short term (Saeed, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014).

Transactional leadership. Transactional leadership is the second most popular leadership style in existence (Caillier, 2014). The founder of transactional leadership is Weber (1947). The primary philosophy of transactional leadership is an exchange (or transaction) based on promises of reward (Burns, 1978). Bass (1985) later expanded on Burns' work on transactional leadership. Transactional leadership occurs when leaders encourage employees to perform their jobs in exchange for something of value (Bass, 1985). Managers of this style use a reward and/or punishment system (Bass, 1985;

Burns, 1978). The reward can consist of compliments, praise and recognition, performance review, promotion, or something of monetary value (Ojokuku, Odetayo, & Sajuyigbe, 2012). Transactional managers motivate employees by appealing to their self-interest and ensuring everyone is in sync with the organization (Abdul & Javed, 2012). Managers accomplish this by making sure everyone follows all rules, procedures, and standards according to the implemented reward and punishment system (Abdul & Javed, 2012; Bass, 1985). Good performance results in rewards while punishments are the result of poor performance (Ahmad, Adi, Noor, Rahman, & Yushuang, 2013; Bass, 1985). Transactional managers communicate requirements and expectations and also the results and consequences of achieving or not achieving the desired results (Rothfelder, Ottenbacher, & Harrington, 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Combining the use of transformational and transactional leadership styles can create a more effective and efficient organization (Bass, 1985).

Authoritarian (autocratic) leadership. Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) is responsible for the existence of authoritarian leadership. Authoritarian managers need to feel powerful and in control and want their employees to fear them (Lewin et al., 1939; Cates et al., 2013). They demand their employees work a certain way to get assignments completed (Schuh et al., 2013). Authoritarian managers tend to exhibit behavior which demands respect and power (Schuh et al., 2013). Authoritarian managers often micromanage employees (Cates et al., 2013). Authoritarian managers often thrive on self-gratification, believing they were solely responsible for the successful completion of the task (Cates et al., 2013; Schuh et al., 2013). Authoritarian managers put distance between themselves and employees in an attempt to feel domineering (Schuh et al., 2013). These actions can result in employees retaliating or feeling belittled, which can result in little to no job satisfaction and an increase in turnover (Schuh et al., 2013). This leadership style is most effective when employee input is not necessary due to the outcome being the same (Cates et al., 2013).

Charismatic leadership. The founder of charismatic leadership is Bennis (1959). Managers within this style are very influential because they are capable of getting people to do what they want them to do through their personality, charm, and ability to communicate (Bennis, 1959; Mittal, 2015). Charismatic managers are very confident, persuasive, and full of charisma (Mittal, 2015). People draw to them and tend to trust them more than other leadership styles (Bass, 1985; Bennis, 1959; Michel, Wallace, & Rawlings, 2013). Charismatic managers can motivate employees with their charm and persuasiveness, thus increasing morale and job satisfaction (Bass, 1985). These managers are attentive and provide their employees with the assistance and encouragement needed to perform their job (Mittal, 2015). Transformational managers exhibit charismatic leadership due to their ability to influence and motivate their employees (Bass et al., 1987).

Laissez faire leadership. The founder of laissez faire leadership is Lewin et al. (1939). Leaders within this style are not effective in managing their employees due to their passive attitude, laid back demeanor, and offering little to no guidance to their employees (Lewin et al., 1939; Raes et al., 2013). A passive attitude can create a lack of desire and motivation within their employees to complete assignments (Lewin et al., 1939). Laissez faire managers avoid making decisions and are not in attendance when needed (Overbey, 2013). This leadership style works best in an environment where the employees are capable of completing work on their own and motivated to get the job done (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012; Raes et al., 2013).

Participative (democratic) leadership. Participative leadership also known as democratic leadership is also a discovery of Lewin et al. (1939). Managers within this style are most effective with getting employees to complete assignments (Lewin et al., 1939). Managers put an emphasis on teamwork because it takes everyone to get the job done, thus demonstrating an interest in the employees and the organization (Lewin et al., 1939). Participative managers offer guidance to the employees and allow employees to provide feedback, thus creating a communicative environment (Arnold & Louglin, 2013; Cates et al., 2013; Lewin et al., 1939). A communicative environment is essential for an organization to achieve its goals (Linski, 2014). These managers make employees feel as if they have an equal stake in the decision making process and the outcome thus potentially increasing morale and motivation (Lewin et al., 1939).

Leadership Styles and Job Satisfaction

The success or failure of an organization is dependent upon the leadership styles incorporated within the culture (Abualrub & Alghamdi, 2012; Chaudhry, Javed, & Sabir, 2012; Ojokuku et al., 2012). Leadership styles should fit the situation or circumstance with which the manager is handling (Mathooko, 2013). Leadership styles are instrumental in providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating employees (Ojkuku et al., 2012). All employees are different and managers should be knowledgeable with how to effectively manage them (Eversole et al., 2012). Managers should not adhere to one particular leadership style to manage all employees (Abualrub & Alghamdi, 2012; Chaudhry et al., 2012; Mathooko, 2013). The leadership style the manager uses can have an affect on the relationship with the employee and the employees' outlook on their work (Saeed et al., 2014; Vlachos, Panagopoulos, & Rapp, 2013). The leadership style usage can also affect how the employees view the company and their future with the company (Breevaart et al., 2013; Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). Lacking the ability and knowledge to manage employees of different generations can have an affect on business performance and job satisfaction (Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). Business performance and job satisfaction can affect employees' productivity (Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). Leadership styles, business performance, and job satisfaction can have an effect on employees.

Researchers have conducted studies exploring the relationship between leadership styles and job (employee) satisfaction. The majority of the researchers' results indicated there is a positive relationship between leadership styles and job (employee) satisfaction (Ertureten et al., 2013; Lakshmi & Basha, 2013; Sakiru, D'Silva, Othman, Daud Silong, & Busayo, 2013). The use of a positive, influencing leadership style can result in the increase of employee satisfaction (Cates et al., 2013; Ertureten et al., 2013; Lakshmi &

Basha, 2013). Employee satisfaction decreases with the use of a negative, domineering leadership style (Cates et al., 2013; Ertureten et al., 2013).

A positive relationship exists between transformational and transactional leadership styles and job performance. In a study to determine the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among nurses, researchers proved transformational leadership had a positive impact on job satisfaction of nurses in Malaysia (Ahmad et al., 2013). Leadership styles and job satisfaction had an effect on the hospitality industry (Kara, Uysal, Sirgy, & Lee, 2013; Rothfelder, Ottenbacher, & Harrington, 2013) and within small and medium enterprises (Sakiru et al., 2013). A positive relationship existed between transformational leadership and job satisfaction within the petroleum sector (Zahari & Shurbagi, 2012). Abdul and Javed (2012) posited a manager who displayed transformational leadership could boost motivation thus increasing job satisfaction. There is a strong relationship exists between transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and job satisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2013; Rothfelder et al., 2013; Sakiru et al., 2013). Both leadership styles (demonstrated separately) had a positive and effective impact on job satisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2013; Rothfelder et al., 2013; Sakiru et al., 2013). Transformational is a leadership style that has a positive and more effective impact on increasing job satisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2013; Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013; Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013).

Two researchers explored the relationship between how effective transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership styles were. Edward and Gill

(2012) revealed the effectiveness of transformational leadership, the less effectiveness of transactional leadership, and the ineffectiveness of laissez faire. Transactional and charismatic leadership styles are effective leadership styles due to the leaders' ability to get employees to increase productivity (Schneider & Schröder, 2012). Charismatic and transactional leadership posed a negative relationship regarding organizational performance (Ojokuku et al., 2012). A positive relationship existed between transformational, authoritarian, and democratic leadership and organizational performance (Ojokuku et al., 2012). The construction sector in the United Arab Emirates preferred democratic leadership style over transformational and autocratic (Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). Chinese businesses were more acceptable of the authoritarian leadership style, which resulted in the existence of a positive relationship between job satisfaction and authoritarian leadership style (Du & Choi, 2013). Due to the demanding quality of the authoritarian leader, job satisfaction is negatively affected (Ertureten, Cemalcilar, & Aycan, 2013; Pietersen & Onl, 2014).

A positive relationship existed between charismatic leadership and employee satisfaction and organizational performance (Vlachos, Panagopoulos, & Rapp, 2013). Studies conducted revealing a positive relationship between job satisfaction and participative leadership (Gharibvand, Mohammad Nurul, Mohiuddin, & Su, 2013; Sarti, 2014). Gharibvand, Mohammad Nurul, Mohiuddin, and Su (2013) received 85% of their responses for participative leadership style while dissatisfaction existed among 15%, resulting in a positive relationship existing between participative leadership style and job satisfaction. Charismatic and participative leadership styles can contribute to the increase of job satisfaction as well.

Generations and Leadership Styles

Flexibility and the knowledge to recognize employees are different is essential in leadership (Eversole et al., 2012). A manager's leadership style should adjust according to the person with whom he/she is interacting (Cates et al., 2013; Mathooko, 2013). Baby Boomers exposure to many events during their generation's upbringing contributes to their ability to adapt to any of the existing leadership styles unlike the younger generations (Cates et al., 2013). One leadership style that often surfaced during research was the transactional leadership style. Transactional leadership relates to performance and getting the job done. While Generation X and the Millennials are different generations, they both prefer the transactional leadership style due to their flexibility and desire to get the job done (Haynes, 2011). Traditionalists can work well under the transactional and authoritarian leadership styles due to their respect for authority (Cates et al., 2013; Haynes, 2011). Traditionalists are good at following instructions without apprehension. Traditionalists appear to work better under a transactional leadership style (Haynes, 2011).

An examination of laissez faire leadership style occurred in the research as well. While employees have the freedom to do as they please, laissez faire leadership is least effective due to the lack of desire and motivation employees possess to complete tasks (Overbey, 2013). Managers who exhibit laissez faire leadership tend to do what others are doing and saying because it presents less conflict (Raes et al., 2013). Generation X and the Millennials welcome the ability to get things done their way as long as they adhere to their deadlines, which is why laissez faire leadership style could work for them (Haynes, 2011).

Creativity, engaging employees, teamwork, and working cohesively are elements of participative leadership. Baby Boomers are more team players and strive on having everyone involved, which makes participative leadership style a preferred choice for this generation (Haynes, 2011). Generation Xers work well under participative leadership style due to their sense of teamwork (Cates et al., 2013). Generation Xers work well in an environment where everyone has fair treatment, and there is a sense of cohesion (Cates et al., 2013). Millennials work well with participative leadership style (Patel, 2014). Having a manager who encourages teamwork and cohesion and provides constant feedback is what Millennials desire (Patel, 2014).

Generations and Motivational Elements

Sustainability in today’s world is important to the success and competitive advantage of an organization (Kian et al., 2013). Motivation can increase employee productivity, which can increase an organization’s competitive advantage (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Intrinsic or extrinsic rewards provide motivation for everyone (Cerasoli, Nicklin, & Ford, 2014; Hofmans, DeGieter, & Pepermans, 2013). Intrinsic rewards include responsibility, training and personal development, recognition, work related activities, and work-life balance (Chekwa, Chukwuanu, & Richardson, 2013; Dhanapal et al., 2013; Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014). Extrinsic rewards include pay, promotions, bonuses, benefits, working conditions, work relationships, and facilities (Chekwa et al., 2013; Dhanapal et al., 2013; Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014).

An organization will need to revamp its reward system to adhere to the age diversification, various expectations, and requirements of the different generations (Chekwa et al., 2013; Giaque, Anderfuhren-Biget, & Varone, 2013). Organizations need to determine what type of reward motivates each generation (Chekwa et al., 2013; Dhanapal et al., 2013; Giaque et al., 2013). Finding the right motivators can increase an organization’s chances of becoming successful, thus increasing its competitive advantage (Cerasoli et al., 2014). Motivational elements increase morale, productivity, and quality in the workforce (Chekwa et al., 2013; Giaque et al., 2013; Kim & Park, 2014).

Management should obtain knowledge on each generation’s motivational elements to determine what motivates them (Islam & Ahmed, 2014; Smith & Galbraith, 2012; Kim & Park, 2014). Management should determine whether those motivators are feasible and when implementation should occur (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Research exists with guidance for motivating Millennials (Haynes, 2011; Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Millennials motivation derives from rewards and punishment (Haynes, 2011), whereas intrinsic rewards motivate Millennials (Acar, 2014). Millennials desire flexibility, work-life balance, good work relationships, and developmental opportunities (Dimitriou & Blum, 2015; Islam & Ahmed, 2014; Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014). In addition to workplace flexibility and work-life balance, Millennials thrive on continuous feedback and training/coaching on a regular basis (Özçelik (2015); however, Millennials influences are a result of extrinsic rewards (Kian et al., 2013). Millennials want more pay and bigger bonuses (Kian et al., 2013). Millennials would like a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Gentry et al., 2010). Managers will need to determine Millennials motivational elements to engage them to be productive.

Reward and punishment are motivators for Generation Xers and Millennials (Haynes, 2011). It is uncertain whether Generation Xers value extrinsic rewards rather than intrinsic rewards or whether intrinsic rewards are their motivators (Catania & Randall, 2013). Generation Xers want job responsibility, advancement opportunities, appreciation for a job well done, and management's assistance in solving personal problems (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Baby Boomers motivators were intrinsic rewards such as promotional opportunities, sensible rules and regulations, and management's assistance in solving personal problems (Islam & Ahmed, 2014). Generation Xers and Baby Boomers appear to share some similarity in motivational elements.

Job (Employee) Satisfaction and Employee Turnover

Employee satisfaction and employee turnover are two important elements organizations constantly review due to the effect it has on an organization's performance (Dhanapal et al., 2013; Lee, 2013; Tariq, Ramzan, & Riaz, 2013). A negative correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover and can create issues within the organization (Hillman, 2014; Kabungaidze & Mahlatshana, 2013; Tziner, Ben-avid, Oren, & Sharoni, 2014). An inverse relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover exists; the higher the level of job satisfaction, the lesser employee turnover and the lower the level of job satisfaction, the higher employee turnover (Abualrub & Alghamdi, 2012; Kabungaidze & Mahlatshana, 2013).

By engaging employees, organizations can increase job satisfaction and decrease employee turnover (Dhanapal et al., 2013; Hillman, 2014). Organizations do not favor employee turnover due to costs organizations incur associated with turnover (Cho & Lewis, 2012; Flint, Haley & McNally, 2013). Organizations incur replacement costs and severance costs due to the voluntary or involuntary exit of employees (Flint et al., 2013). Pietersen and Onl (2014) and Cho and Lewis (2012) reported employee turnover jeopardizes productivity and efficiency. Researchers should continue to explore and resolve the effect employee turnover has on job satisfaction.

Two elements could have a major impact on employee turnover are leadership styles and job satisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2013; Liu, Cai, Li, Shi, & Fang, 2013). The ability to recognize employees are different and the knowledge to effectively manage them is necessary for the successful manager (Eversole et al., 2012). If a manager uses the wrong leadership style on an employee, that could result in the employee terminating their employment (Frooman, Mendelson, & Murphy, 2012; Flint et al., 2013). The right leadership style may increase job satisfaction and decrease employee turnover (Kara et al., 2013). There is no relationship between transformational leadership and employee turnover due to the manager's ability to engage the employees while there is a relationship between laissez faire and employee turnover due to the manager's nonchalant demeanor (Frooman et al., 2012). Low job satisfaction existed when using an authoritarian leadership style due to their demanding and bossy demeanor, which lessens employees desire to be productive (Pietersen & Onl, 2014). Managers should avoid using leadership styles that are less productive or engaging.

Employees leave jobs for multiple reasons. Perhaps the organization's culture was not what the employee expected. There are instances when employees do not blend with the culture of the organization (Liu et al., 2013). Employees may have high expectations of an organization that are not met that result in low job satisfaction. Lack of motivation or moral could result in low job satisfaction thus increasing employee turnover (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012; Deal et al., 2013). An employee's lack of trust in his or her manager can contribute to low job satisfaction (Kabungaidze & Mahlatshana, 2013). The lack of pay, security, working conditions, promotion, and recognition are contributors to low job satisfaction and increase employee turnover (Lu & Gursoy, 2013). An employee's workload and stress are contributing factors to low job satisfaction and high employee turnover (Tariq et al., 2013). If an employee does not have a high degree of job satisfaction, he/she could choose to terminate their employment (Frooman et al., 2012; Lu & Gursoy, 2013). Ensuring an organization's rules and regulations are reasonable, and also monitoring and correcting the treatment of employee by their managers may reduce employee turnover (Flint et al., 2013). Organizations should explore the affect it has on its employees' job satisfaction and employee turnover.

Through the exploration of teachers in rural schools, Kabungaidze, Mahlatshana, and Ngirande (2013) were able to show a negative relationship existed between age and employee turnover. Organizational and work factors affect Baby Boomers job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and willingness to quit (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Older employees were less likely to leave their place of employment as opposed to younger employees (Kabungaidze, Mahlatshana, & Ngirande, 2013; Young, Sturts, Ross, & Kim, 2013). A lack of recognition, developmental and advancement opportunities will result in younger generations exhibiting high levels of employee turnover (Pietersen & Onl, 2014). Employees that exhibit poor job satisfaction withdraw internally, no longer feeling compelled to do well (Tziner et al., 2014). Organizations should examine why employees leave to gain a better understanding of how to possibly avoid it and review their procedures and investigate the employee-manager relationship to reduce turnover (Flint et al., 2013). Managers should explore possible leadership strategies and implement the most effective ones.

Possible Leadership Strategies

The presence of four generations within the workforce, flexibility and the knowledge to recognize employees are different and managing them according to those differences are essential in business (Edge, 2014; Eversole et al., 2012; Hernaus & Poloski Vokic, 2014). Managers with these capabilities can assist in developing an organization's leadership strategies. Various researchers explored several leadership strategies managers may use to engage a multigenerational workforce to ensure productivity (Amayah & Gedro, 2014; Cates et al., 2013; Mencl & Lester, 2014). Possible solutions managers and organizations can encourage are better communication, trust, and improving how an employee identifies with the organization (Cekada, 2012). If employees can identify themselves as an integral part of the organization, the employees may feel compelled to be productive (Cekada, 2012).

Encourage teamwork and collaboration, flexible work environment, work-life balance, developmental opportunities, feedback and recognition (Ferri-Reed, 2013; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Riggs, 2013a). Employees who feel as if they are part of a team may feel encouraged to produce quality work. The collaboration effort is necessary for assignment completion. Feedback and recognition can provide the employee with satisfaction thus increasing their desire to be productive (Bennett et al., 2012; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Managers could address problems with organizational procedures and the treatment of employees by their managers (Flint et al., 2013).

Organizations should implement policies, practices, training, and development to increase knowledge on generational differences (Amayah & Gedro, 2014; Cates et al., 2013; Barron, Leask, & Fyall, 2014). Employees and managers should take generational diversity training (Branscum & Sciaraffa, 2013). Employees will develop a better understanding of the other generations working beside them (Branscum & Sciaraffa, 2013). Increasing knowledge on generational differences will enable leaders to adjust their chosen leadership style, increase morale, productivity, and the quality of work

(Eversole et al., 2012; Riggs, 2013b). This increased knowledge can create cohesion and synergy among employees (Eversole et al., 2012). Develop activities and programs that will bring the generations together (Fester & Schafer, 2013; Barron et al., 2014). Bringing generations together can create a sense of cohesion and allow employees the opportunity to get to know one another (Fester & Schafer, 2013).

Employees should shadow their generational counterparts in an attempt to familiarize themselves with their works and to get to know them better (Fester & Schafer, 2013). Incorporating a mentoring program for Millennials would allow the pairing of Millennials with Baby Boomers to bridge the age gap and allow a more synergetic interaction between the two generations (Bennett et al., 2012; Ferri-Reed; 2013). Shadowing and mentoring will enable others to become familiar with other work processes and one another (Bennett et al., 2012; Fester & Schafer, 2013). Understanding Millennials' job expectations could better position an organization to attract and retain this generation (Linden, 2015). Millennials expect (a) opportunities for professional growth, (b) compensation, (c) recognition, (d) promotions, (e) supervisor support, (f) flexibility, (g) environment, and (h) job security from an employer in exchange for doing their job (Linden, 2015). While the different generations share similarities and differences, this collaboration has the potential for organizational success (Cekada, 2012; Mencl & Lester, 2014). The implementation of the most effective strategies is the determining factor of whether managers will be successful in engaging their multigenerational workforce.

Transition

Section 1 includes an introduction of the topic for the research of this qualitative single case study. Section 1 also includes the general and specific business problems regarding strategies managers use to engage their multigenerational workforce. The literature review entailes an in depth discussion on generational cohort theory, which is the conceptual framework for this study. Other discussions included in the literature review consisted of generational differences, relationships between generations, leadership styles, and motivational elements, job satisfaction, and employee turnover, and possible leadership strategies.

Section 2 encompasses the dynamics of the project. This section includes the data collection process, which entails the roles of the researcher and participants and an overview of the research method and design. The data collection process also includes a description of the population used for the sample, sampling method, sample size, and eligibility criteria. Section 2 entails a discussion on data organization, data analysis techniques, and ethical research procedures used for this doctoral study. I discuss the reliability of the data and provided an explanation of internal and external validity.

Section 3 is the final section of this doctoral study. This section includes a discussion of the findings as a result of the data analysis. I provide a discussion of applications to professional practice and implications for social change. Recommendations for action include best practice strategies management may incorporate to engage its workforce. Recommendations for further research incorporated suggestions for additional research.

Section 2: The Project

This section includes a review of the purpose statement and a discussion of the roles of the researcher and participants. This section includes more in-depth information on the research method and design. I provide a description of the population used for the sample, sampling method, sample size, and eligibility criteria. This section includes a thorough discussion of the ethical research procedures and an explanation of the process of data collection, organization, and analyzation. A discussion of the reliability and validity of the doctoral study will occur.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore leadership strategies federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce. The population will consist of federal government managers, within the metro Atlanta, Georgia, who have strategies to enhance multigenerational workforce productivity. The implications for social change from this study may include the potential to increase employee morale and motivation by engaging them thus decreasing employee turnover and potentially the unemployment rate. Low morale and motivation have the potential to cause employees to leave an organization, which can contribute to the unemployment rate if the employee spends any time not working upon leaving the organization. It may also provide federal government managers with the framework for understanding its multigenerational workforce by encouraging a positive work relationship that may affect and improve relationships with their coworkers, families, and communities. Employees want to feel understood and may less likely talk negatively about their managers and organization to other coworkers, their families, and members of the community if they obtain understanding.

Role of the Researcher

I was the primary data collection instrument as Xu and Storr (2012) stated. It is the researcher's responsibility to collect, analyze, and interpret data in an ethical manner; while eliminating and reducing bias to report valid and reliable information (Farinde, 2013). It is important as a researcher the findings of this study not include personal feelings, experiences, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and generational views (Moustakas, 1994). The incorporation of personal feelings, experiences, beliefs, opinions, and generational views could potentially affect accurate reporting. In my role as the researcher, I was the primary data collection instrument and adhered to all ethical rules and regulations while conducting this study in order to (a) collect, analyze, and interpret data; (b) eliminate and reduce bias; (c) report valid and reliable information; and (d) not include personal feelings, experiences, beliefs, opinions, and generational views.

This topic is of interest to me due to the facilitation of numerous employee survey meetings I have conducted at my organization over the past few years. Employees expressed concern with how management led them and provided possible motivational elements they would like implemented. Throughout the discussions, each meeting yielded the representation of the different generations. Individuals within similar age groups had similar concerns. Notice of different concerns within the age groups took place as well. Information regarding similar and different concerns may prove valuable and beneficial to management if expounded. Knowledge of the differences between the various generations and the possession of possible strategies to engage a multigenerational workforce could increase employee/job satisfaction.

Researchers must adhere to ethical standards and various rules and regulations regarding conducting any research (Damainakis & Woodford, 2012; Farinde, 2013). The Belmont Report protocol is a requirement the researcher must adhere, and it enforces the respect of persons, beneficence, and justice on the research of human subjects in research (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 1979). I adhered to the principals within the Belmont Report. Prior to interviewing the participants, I disclosed details of the interview process and the collection of information within the letter of consent and again at the onset of the scheduled interview.

In agreement with Jacobs and Furgerson (2012), the formulation of an interview protocol (see Appendix A) provided the basis for conducting the semistructured interviews. I used the same interview protocol for all participants. Asking open-ended questions allowed the participants to feel comfortable and answer freely while sharing their experiences and knowledge (Jacobs & Furgerson, 2012). Disclosing the confidential keeping of gathered information and not sharing the information with anyone gained participants' trust and cooperation (Gibson, Benson, & Brand, 2013; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

Participants

Participant criteria must align with the research to gather adequate data (Yin, 2014). The participants for this qualitative single case study consisted of managers from one federal agency within the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. The criteria for study participants consists of being in a federal government managerial position for at least 5 years, must have different generations within their workgroup, must have leadership strategies they use to engage their multigenerational workforce, and can provide insight into those leadership strategies.

To gain access to participants for this study, an authorizing official of a federal agency received a letter of cooperation. Once I received a letter of approval from the authorizing official, federal employees listed as managers or supervisors within the employee directory of one federal agency received participation invitations. Accessibility to federal employees to conduct interviews usually occurs during their lunch hour. If the participants were unable to meet during the requested time, I would have suggested interviews by phone, after hours face-to-face, or video call interviews.

It was important that I establish a working relationship with the participants in my study. I developed this working relationship in a variety of ways. It is the researcher's responsibility to provide participants with letters of consent prior to interviewing, detailing the specifics of the process (Gibson et al., 2013). Before interviewing, each participant received a letter of consent, which entailed the details of the study including the purpose, the process, and the storing of information. Reestablishing consent on the day of the interview allowed the participants the ability to withdraw if he or she chose not to continue with the interview. Jacob and Furgerson (2012) posited a researcher should share pertinent information with participants. I provided my background information to each participant, both personal and professional, and an explanation of this topic selection at the beginning of the interview. Providing the previously mentioned information put the participants at ease; thus allowing them to view me as a person trying to obtain some information and not as someone trying to harm them. Maintaining eye contact and listening attentively shows there is an interest in what they have to say (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). At the conclusion of the interview, each participant received verbal gratitude for his or her assistance and information regarding what will occur going forward. Reassurance that the disclosure of personal information is confidential (Beskow et al., 2012; Thurkettle, 2014) and prohibits the exposure of anonymity to anyone besides the researcher (Gibson et al., 2012) also occurred at the conclusion of the interview. I will secure recordings and notes for 5 years in a locked file cabinet in my home office, after which a professional shredding company will shred them.

Research Method and Design

Selection of the appropriate research method and design are an integral part of the doctoral study. The research method and design are the basis for conducting the research and contributing factors in the collection of data. The method and design chosen for this study consist of the qualitative method and single case study design. This combination will allow the gathering of necessary information to explore best strategies federal government managers might incorporate to attain a higher level of productivity and effectiveness.

Research Method

There are three research methods available to choose from to conduct this doctoral study – qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. I chose the qualitative research method to conduct this research. The quantitative research method entails primarily statistical data (Muskat et al., 2012). The quantitative method also entails the inclusion of hypotheses and a larger selection of participants (Bansal & Corley, 2012). Quantitative research method encompasses tests and close ended questions to obtain information from participants (Zohrabi, 2013). Mixed method is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Muskat et al., 2012; Zohrabi, 2013). According to Sadan (2014), the complexity level of the problem is a determining factor of whether or not to use mixed methods. The quantitative method and mixed methods were not the appropriate selection for this research study, comparison of variables and testing of hypotheses did not occur; nor does the complexity level of the problem warrants its use.

The qualitative method is best for the exploration of meanings and experiences regarding a problem or issue within a specified topic of study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The qualitative method also allows for flexibility in obtaining participants' thoughts and feelings regarding their lived experiences (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015). The qualitative method is the most appropriate selection for the exploration of federal government managers' experiences to reveal strategies federal government managers use to engage their multigenerational workforce.

Research Design

The qualitative research method has numerous research designs that can prove to be an effective combination including ethnography, narrative, phenomenological, and case study. Ethnography explores the shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and languages of a cultural group (Percy et al., 2015; Simpson, Slutskaya, Hughes, & Simpson, 2014). Hunt (2014) posited cultural characteristics are the basis for ethnography. Ethnography requires the researcher to spend time within the culture with participants (Moustakas, 1994). The purpose of this study is to explore strategies, not explore cultural aspects of a group.

Maria (2015) posited narrative design entails understanding and interpreting the lives and meanings of participants' experiences. Understanding the lived experiences allow researchers insight into the participants' perspectives (Green, 2013). The narrative design consists of in-depth written *stories* (Maria, 2015). The researcher also considers the participants' environment when constructing the narrative (Hunt, 2014). Narrative design is not a suitable selection because interpretation, environment consideration, and in-depth *stories* are not elements of this study.

Moustakas (1994) posited phenomenological design consists of exploring shared experiences and understanding meanings of lived experiences based on a phenomenon. Participants lived experiences are the basis for phenomenological design (Bansal &

Corley, 2012). Phenomenological design encompasses obtaining textural descriptions from participants shared experiences (Hunt, 2014). The phenomenological design is not the preferred selection because understanding the meanings of lived experiences and obtaining textural descriptions will not occur in this study.

The most effective design for this qualitative method selection is the case study. Researchers use case study when they are attempting to explore participants' experiences and perspectives within a real life setting (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) posited case study answers *how*, *what*, and *why* questions of the participants. The case study does not require the incorporation of a larger participant base as some of the qualitative research designs (Yin, 2014). The participant base for this case study will consist of 3 to 5 managers within a federal agency. The case study does allow for the collection of data from multiple sources (Unluer, 2012). Also, an exploration of a topic using multiple sources warrants the use of a case study (Xie, Wu, Luo, & Hu, 2012; Yin, 2014). Multiple sources for this study consist of interviews, interview notes, and any available company documents.

Data saturation entails interviewing participants until the information obtained satisfies the research conducted (Klafke, Eliott, Olver, & Wittert, 2014; Walker, 2012). The data are saturated when (a) no new information discovery, (b) no new theme emergence, (c) no new coding exists, and (d) the replication of the study is possible (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The use of member checking will also ensure no new data exists. Member checking entails conducting an interview, interpreting what the participant stated during the interview, and allowing the participant to validate the researcher's interpretation (Harper & Cole, 2012; Koelsch, 2013). I will ensure data saturation by interviewing all participants until no new information emerge (Tan & Manca, 2013) and incorporating member checking (Reilly, 2013).

Population and Sampling

The population for this qualitative case study will consist of managers from one federal agency within the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. The generations represented within the data will consist of Traditionalists born from 1922-1944, Baby Boomers born from 1945-1964, Generation X born from 1965-1980, and Generation Y born from 1981-2000 (Becton et al., 2014; Gursoy et al., 2013). The federal managerial participants selected for the study must hold a managerial position for at least 5 years. Federal government managers can provide information on existing strategies and potential new strategies to engage a multigenerational workforce. Federal government managers will also provide insight regarding their experiences and existing knowledge working with different generations.

Researchers often attempt to explore a problem or issue in a qualitative case study (Tomkins & Eatough, 2013; Wahyuni, 2012). I explored the multigenerational workforce and the lack of strategies available for federal government managers to use to engage their multigenerational workforce. Purposive sampling is the preferred method of participant selection for the exploration of a problem (Xie et al., 2012). Purposive sampling is the preferred selection due to the ability to ask and select a small sample size of participants who may share similar characteristics, attitudes, and beliefs (Draper & Swift, 2011).

The sample size for this case study will include three managers from one federal agency. A case study should consist of three to five participants (Yin, 2014). The sample size is appropriate for this case study because of the depth of the interview questions (Dworkin, 2012). The sample size is limited in size to obtain an in depth understanding of the phenomenon (Marshall, Cardon, Podder, & Fontenot, 2013). The sample size is appropriate for this case study because of the depth of the interview questions (Yin, 2014).

Data saturation entails interviewing participants until the desired amount of information obtained does not expose any additional themes or new information to satisfy the conducted research (Klafke, Eliott, Olver, & Wittert, 2014). Data saturation occurs when a) no new data exists, b) no new themes emerge, and c) the replication of the study is possible based on having sufficient information (Dworkin, 2012; Fusch & Ness, 2015). Dworkin (2012) posited data saturation could occur by interviewing anywhere from five to 50 participants. Data saturation can help identify possible themes (Suri, 2011). Member checking entails conducting an interview, interpreting what the participant stated during the interview, and allowing the participant to validate the researcher's interpretation and will ensure no new data exists (Harper & Cole, 2012; Koelsch, 2013). Reilly (2013) posited the incorporation of member checking could ensure the achievement of data saturation. Interviewing all participants until no additional themes or new information emerges ensures data saturation (Tan & Mecca, 2014). I ensured data saturation by incorporating member checking and interviewing all participants until no additional themes or new information emerges.

Federal employees listed as managers or supervisors within the employee directory of one federal agency received participation invitations to obtain the desired number of participants for this study. A request for referrals of other federal government managers and supervisors from the selected federal agency would have occurred if I could not get enough participants. The request for additional referrals would continue to obtain the desired number of participants to conduct the interviews for the study. If that method proved unsuccessful, a random selection of additional managers and supervisors from the respective federal agency directory would have occurred to obtain the necessary number of participants. Accessibility to federal employees to conduct interviews will occur during their lunch hour. If the participants were unable to meet during their lunch hour, suggestions to conduct their interviews by phone, after hours face-to-face, or video call interview would occur. The minimum criteria for participation were that (a) each participant must be a federal government employee within the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia, (b) each participant must fall within one of the four generation categories, and (c) must be in a leadership position for at least 5 years. To avoid bias, I selected participants who worked at a different federal agency than myself and with whom I have no working relationship.

Semistructured interview format using open-ended questions (see Appendix D) in a comfortable setting of the participants' choice (Dworkin, 2012; Hunt, 2014), preferably face-to-face (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013) occurred. I suggested meeting in a conference room at the participants' place of work. I also accepted participants' suggestions on places to conduct the interviews. If their lunch hour was not a feasible time to conduct the interview, we mutually agreed upon an appropriate time and method to conduct the interview either by phone, after hours face-to-face at a local bookstore, or video call interview. Each participant received a letter of consent acknowledging acceptance of the participation invitation they initially received. The letter of consent included the details of the study, the purpose, the process, and the storing of information. A request asking participants to bring a copy of the letter of consent with them to the interview occurred. It is important to reestablish consent on the day of the interview, allowing the participants the ability to withdraw if he or she chooses. Participants signed a copy of the letter of consent to acknowledge their continuance with the interview process.

I informed the participants of the recording of the interviews ensuring them confidentiality will occur, disclosing or sharing no identifying information with others. Transcription of the recorded interviews occurred verbatim. Each participant received disclosure of brief note taking during the interview and encouragement to disregard it and not allow it to distract them. Finally, each participant received information informing them of (a) the possibility of additional interviews, (b) the analyzation of collected information and the determination any similarities and differences, (c) personal information remaining confidential, and recordings and notes remaining locked in a file cabinet in my home office for 5 years after which I will hire a professional shredding company to shred the information.

Ethical Research

Ethical standards bind researchers to act a specific way, which requires adherence to rules and regulations regarding conducting any research (Damainakis & Woodford, 2012; Farinde, 2013). A researcher's responsibilities include collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data in an ethical manner, which includes eliminating and reducing bias to report valid and reliable information (Farinde, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). As a researcher, I fulfilled the responsibilities by eliminating and reducing bias by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data in an ethical manner.

As a researcher, adequate assurance of the ethical protection of participants is a priority for me (Damainakis & Woodford, 2012; Johnson, 2014). The ethical protection of participants is the basis of the informed consent process and maintaining participants confidentiality. The IRB approval number is # is 01-05-17-0381960. Each participant received a participation invitation requesting their assistance in the research study and a letter of consent agreeing to participate in the research study. The letter of consent included the details of the study and its purpose, the process for the interview and study and storage of information. The participants had the ability to withdraw at any time by contacting me via phone, email, or in person. There are no repercussions if any participants decided to withdraw from the process. I will reestablish consent on the day of the interview by verbally reading the letter of consent to the participant. After the reading of consent, I asked the participant if he/she understands the consent and ask him/her to sign the consent if he/she wished to continue with the interview. Participants did not receive incentives for their voluntary participation.

A researcher is responsible for the collection of data, face-to-face (Houghton et al., 2013), via a semistructured interview format using open-ended questions in a comfortable setting of the participants' choice will occur (Dworkin, 2012; Hunt, 2014). I used a recording device and take brief notes to document interviews; and informed the participants additional interviews may take place, analyzation of information to determine any similarities and differences will occur, personal information will remain confidential, and when not in use, recordings and notes will remain locked in a file cabinet in my home office for 5 years. The proper destruction of data will occur upon the expiration of the 5-year data retention requirement.

The participants' identities remained confidential when reporting the data (Beskow et al., 2012; Thurkettle, 2014). I concealed the identity of each participant by using alphanumeric coding (i.e. M1, M2, M3), not disclosing any personally identifiable information, and not sharing information that will reveal participants' identities (Beskow et al., 2012; Thurkettle, 2014). When the data (recordings and transcriptions) are not in use, I will secure the information in a locked file cabinet in my home office for 5 years.

Upon the expiration of the 5-year data retention requirement, I will properly destroy the data.

Data Collection

The data collection process for this qualitative single case study consisted of interviewing three managers from one federal government agency. The data collection process also consisted of reviewing any documentation the managers possess to substantiate their strategies for engaging their multigenerational workforce. The interview questions (see Appendix B) were the basis for obtaining in depth information from the semistructured interviews.

Data Collection Instruments

The primary data collection instrument is the researcher (Xu & Storr, 2012). Semistructured interviews are instrumental in gathering data for research studies (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Houghton et al., 2013; Qu & Dumay, 2011) and did serve as the secondary data collection instrument. Semistructured interviews in the form of open-ended questions (see Appendix D) allow for flexibility and free flowing of information (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Qu & Dumay, 2011). Open-ended questions in a comfortable setting will allow participants to feel at ease discussing their experiences, which is important when interviewing and gathering data (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Dworkin, 2012; Hunt, 2014). The review of company documents is useful in research to substantiate information obtained during the interview process (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013; Stake, 1978; Yin, 2014). Company records can include manager handbooks, leadership training materials, and/or survey results.

The use of a digital recording device is important to record participants' answers to a set of open-ended questions in a semistructured interview (Yin, 2014; Zohrabi, 2013). For this doctoral study, I served as the primary data collection instrument and used (a) semistructured interviews, as a secondary data collection instrument, with open-ended questions in a comfortable setting of the participants' choice to conduct interviews; (b) company document reviews as a third data collection instrument; (c) a secondary recording device in addition to the digital recording device; and (d) Dragon Naturally Speaking software downloaded on my laptop to aid in transcribing for the member checking process.

To ensure reliability and validity of the information gathered, a researcher should use triangulation (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2014), member checking (Houghton et al., 2013; Stewart, Polak, Young, & Schultz, 2012; Stipp & Kapp, 2012), and an interview protocol (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gibson et al., 2013; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Methodological triangulation can occur using participants' interviews and documentation obtained from participants (Yin, 2014). Member checking can entail each participant receiving a copy of their interpreted transcribed interview to review in its entirety and validating the accuracy of the interpretation (Houghton et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2012; Stipp & Kapp, 2012). A study warrants an interview protocol to ensure consistency with each participant's interview (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gibson et al., 2013; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). I used triangulation, member checking, and an interview protocol (see Appendix A) to ensure reliability and validity within each interview conducted.

Data Collection Technique

Data collections entailed conducting semistructured interviews using open-ended questions in a comfortable setting of the participants' choice to allow participants to feel at ease discussing their lived experiences (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Dworkin, 2012; Hunt, 2014). Semistructured interviews are instrumental in gathering the necessary data to conduct research (Draper & Swift, 2011; Houghton et al., 2013; Qu & Dumay, 2011). The employees' lunch hour may be the most logical time to conduct the interviews. If that was not feasible, the participant and I decided on another agreed upon time and method to conduct the interview. Each interview followed an interview protocol (see Appendix A) to ensure consistency with each participant's interview (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gibson et al., 2013; Granot, Brashear, & Motta, 2012).

Before the interview began, the participants received information regarding the recording of interviews conducted via a digital recording device and Dragon Naturally Speaking software. I also informed the participants that I would take notes during the interviews and not allow that to interfere with the session. Each participant answered the same interview questions (see Appendix B) and had the ability to ask for clarification of any interview question. Researchers cannot influence participants to answer interview questions in a particular way. Each participant had the ability to add any additional information at the end of the interview. The interview concluded after the asking of all questions, and the participant has stated there is nothing else they wish to include.

Upon receiving a signed letter of consent from the participants and discussing the specifics of the research study and process, each participant received an alphanumeric code, which coincided with the digital recording and transcribed interviews and ensured the confidentiality of the participants and their information. I reviewed the participants' interviews and documentation to triangulate data methodologically. The review of documentation obtained from participants is useful to substantiate information obtained during the interview process (Boblin et al., 2013; Stake, 1978; Yin, 2014). Information within submitted documentation may provide insight regarding managers' strategies. Documentation participants may provide are manager handbooks, leadership training materials, and/or survey results.

Member checking is important in the data collection process due to each participant being able to validate their respective interview (Houghton et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2012; Stipp & Kapp, 2012). Member checking entails participants receiving a copy of their interpreted, transcribed interview to review and validate for accuracy. I called each participant to ensure they received the copy and to discuss whether they agreed with my interpretations of the interview. The participant made changes to the copy, signed it, and return it to me within a specified timeframe. After receiving the participants' validations, the reviewing of data for possible themes occurred. I analyzed the data collected based on the discovered themes.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using interviews as a data collection technique. The advantages include (a) interviews conducted in a comfortable setting, (b) participants can feel at ease, and (c) interviews can allow for free flow of information (Draper & Swift, 2011; Dworkin, 2012; Houghton et al., 2013; Hunt, 2014; Qu & Dumay, 2011). Some disadvantages can include (a) schedule conflict, (b) participant withholding information due to shyness/introvert, (c) interview questions are not formulated properly, and (d) the researcher lacking interviewing skills (Draper & Swift, 2011; Dworkin, 2012; Houghton et al., 2013; Hunt, 2014; Qu & Dumay, 2011).

There are advantages and disadvantages to using document review as a data collection method. The advantages include the ability to corroborate data obtained from participants' interviews and obtaining additional information to substantiate participants' interviews and research (Boblin et al., 2012; Yin, 2014). The disadvantages include (a) not enough information is available to substantiate participants' interviews, (b) the information available contradicts the information participants' supply in their interviews, and (c) confidential classification of requested information within company documents (Boblin et al., 2012; Stake, 1978; Yin, 2014).

Data Organization Technique

Proper data organization techniques in qualitative research ensure the validity, reliability, and transferability of data (Kemparaj & Chavan, 2013). The disclosure of personal information remains confidential (Beskow et al., 2012; Thurkettle, 2014) via the coding process (Gibson et al., 2013). The coding process consisted of assigning alphanumeric coding to each participant. The coding coincided with the recorded interviews, handwritten notes, and transcripts. If participant 1 is M1, a verbal announcement occurred at the beginning of the recorded interview along with the date, time, and place. The recorded interview ended acknowledging the ending of an interview with M1. The acknowledgment occurred for all of the participants recorded interviews and handwritten notes. The use of a digital recording device to document the interviews and Dragon Naturally Speaking software to transcribe the interviews contributed to the accuracy of the information. A flash drive and CDs stores the recordings secured in a locked file cabinet in my home office.

Another aspect of the coding process is identifying, categorizing, and organizing emerging themes. Researchers use qualitative software programs in the data analysis process to aid in coding, categorizing, and organizing emerging themes (Castleberry, 2014; Hilal & Alabri, 2013; Sarros et al., 2014). The uploading of digitally recorded interviews into NVivo and identification of possible themes occurred. NVivo has the capability of storing the uploaded information along with the identified themes.

A flash drive and separate CDs stores recordings and transcripts transcribed from the recordings. The transcripts reflect the same coding as the recorded interviews. Labeling of the flash drive, CDs, and transcripts occurred to ensure easy retrieval, while securing all items is important in the research process (Anyan, 2013). A locked file cabinet in my home office stores all information for 5 years after which a professional shredding company will destroy and shred. I am the only person with a key to the file cabinet.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies federal government managers use to engage their multigenerational workforce. It is important to use the most appropriate data analysis process for the chosen research design (Yin, 2014). Data analysis for this research study entails incorporating Yin's data analysis process. The five steps include (a) compiling the data, (b) disassembling the data, (c) reassembling the data, (d) interpreting the data, and (e) drawing a conclusion derived from the data (Yin, 2014).

Methodological triangulation is one data analysis process within the case study design used to compile data (Yin, 2014). Methodological triangulation entails the use of multiple data sources and can ensure data saturation (Anyan, 2013; Boblin et al., 2013; Fusch & Ness, 2015). The multiple data sources for this study consist of the researcher, the interviews, interview notes, and managers' or company records. Readers can obtain an in depth understanding of the research with the use of methodological triangulation (Denzin, 2012). I used methodological triangulation to compile data collected from multiple data sources.

Compiling data began with the interview. An interview protocol (see Appendix A) guided each interview. The recording of each interview occurred via a digital recording device and Dragon Naturally Speaking. During each interview, I paraphrased the participants' responses after they supplied an answer to each question to ensure I understand what they are saying. Document review occurred after each interview. Transcribing of the interviews, interview notes, and document review findings occurred via Dragon Naturally Speaking.

Each participant participated in member checking. Member checking entailed each participant receiving a copy of the summarized interviews to review, validate, make corrections, sign, and return for completion (Harper & Cole, 2012; Harvey, 2015; Koelsch, 2013; Reilly, 2013). Once I successfully completed the member checking process, I uploaded the digitally recorded interviews and document reviews into NVivo. The use of the NVivo qualitative data analysis software program aided in the coding process and identifying, categorizing and organizing emerging themes (Castleberry, 2014; DaMota Pedrosa et al., 2012; Sarros, Luca, Densten, & Santora, 2014). The coding of data is part of the disassembling of data process, whereas identifying, categorizing, and organizing emerging themes is part of the reassembling of data process (Yin, 2014).

Upon completion of the disassembling and reassembling of data, I interpreted data findings obtained from NVivo. As previously mentioned the information uploaded into NVivo were a compilation of information obtained from the researcher, the interviews, interview notes, and managers'/company records. I used methodological triangulation to corroborate the data findings from NVivo. The ability to corroborate data obtained from multiple sources can prove more beneficial than obtaining data from a single source (Boblin et al., 2013; Yin, 2014).

The basis for a thorough assessment of information retrieved from NVivo is the correlation between the key themes and the conceptual framework. The correlation between the key themes and the conceptual framework lies within the exploration of two theories and the central research question. The exploration of theories include the employee engagement theory and the generational theory. The premise of the employee engagement theory is the measurement of engagement or disengagement of employees through their level of commitment to accomplish the organization’s goals (Kahn, 1990). Individuals born during a similar time period will develop commonalities in values and beliefs are the premise behind generational theory (Strauss & Howe, 1997; Srinivasan, 2012). The central research question is: What leadership strategies do federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce to enhance productivity? My interpretation of data will include an assessment based upon the information obtained from NVivo and the theories of the conceptual framework and research question. The final step, concluding the data, follows the interpretation of data.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are essential in conducting quality research due to the creation of trustworthiness (Yin, 2013). The researcher wants to ensure the data and methods used for obtaining the data are reliable and valid. Dependability is an element of reliability. Creditability, transferability, and confirmability are elements of validity.

Reliability

Dependability is a term associated with reliability (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The preference to use participants with whom no working, professional, or personal relationships exist ensures dependability of the information gathered (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Harper & Cole, 2012; Houghton et al., 2013). Member checking of data interpretation ensures dependability by allowing the participants to review and validate the researcher's interpretation of their interviews (Koelsch, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; Stewart et al., 2012). To ensure dependability, the participants used in this study came from a federal agency other than the one where I work, and I employed the use of member checking of data interpretation.

Validity

Validity consists of creditability, confirmability, and transferability. A researcher incorporates member checking in the research process as a method to ensure creditability of the information gathered (Burkholder, 2014; Mukminin & McMahon, 2013; Rush, 2012). Member checking entails the ability to ask participants follow up questions during the interview and rephrasing each participant's response to ensure the correct interpretation of their responses (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Houghton et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2012). Ensuring each participant received an interpreted copy of the interview (Burkholder, 2014; Mukminin & McMahon, 2013) and each participant had the ability to review and supply corrections if the interpretations are incorrect (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Houghton et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2012) are elements of member checking and contribute to validity. Implementing an interview protocol assisted in obtaining creditability. The use of an interview protocol ensures consistency throughout the interview process because each interview follows the same guidelines and script while asking the same questions (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gibson et al., 2013; Jacobs & Furgerson, 2012). I (a) asked participants follow up questions and rephrase responses for correct interpretation, (b) provided each participant with an interpreted copy of the interview for review, and (c) allowed each participant to make corrections to any misrepresented information to ensure the information gathered is creditable.

Transferability is an element of validity (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Transferability occurs when the information can transfer from one group to another by the researcher providing detailed information of the population sample (Houghton et al., 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The reader decides whether transferability occurs. The population sample consists of three managers from one federal government agency in the metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. Managerial participants had to have held a managerial position for at least 5 years and managed each of the four generations. Those specifics will allow another researcher the ability to transfer this study to another group. In addition to the specifics previously mentioned, the use of an interview protocol can ensure transferability due to the researcher's consistency with following the same guidelines and asking the same questions (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Gibson et al., 2013; Jacobs & Furgerson, 2012).

Confirmability exists once dependability, creditability, and transferability has occurred (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The implementation of methodological triangulation contributes to the validity of research within a case study (Yin, 2013). Houghton et al. (2013) posited similarities could exist within different data collection sources. Member checking can also ensure confirmability of the data and tools used for research. Providing participants with an interpreted copy of the interview for them to review and make corrections if necessary can confirm the information obtained (Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Houghton et al., 2013; Stewart et al., 2012). I called the participants to ensure they received the interpreted copy and to discuss whether they were in agreement with the interpretations confirmed information as well. Participants made the necessary changes, signed the copy, and returned it within the timeframe. With myself as the primary data collection instrument in conjunction with conducting interviews, reviewing company documents, and the implementation of member checking confirmed the information obtained throughout the research process. Maintaining a reflective journal consisting of thoughts and decisions throughout the data analysis process (Black, Palombaro, & Dole, 2013; Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Houghton et al., 2013) proved beneficial for future clarification.

Data saturation entails interviewing participants until no new information or themes emerge resulting in the desired amount of information to satisfy the conducted research (Dworkin, 2012; Klafke et al., 2014; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Tan & Manca, 2013). In addition to no new information or theme emergence, the data is saturated when the replication of the study is possible (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation can help one identify possible themes (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Suri, 2011; Tan & Manca, 2013). I ensured data saturation by interviewing all participants and reviewing all of the data until the revealing of no additional information occurred or no new themes existed.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 included reintroducing the purpose statement and discussing my role as the researcher, in addition to, an in depth discussion of the participants and the research method and design. I justified the population and sample size associated with the participants and stressed the importance of conducting ethical research. Section 2 included information on data collection instruments and techniques, in addition to, the use of data organization techniques for this doctoral study.

The final section of this doctoral study is Section 3. In this section, I discuss the findings that result from the data analysis and the applications to professional practice and implications for social change. Recommendations for action include best practice strategies management may incorporate to engage its workforce. Also included are recommendations for further study and suggestions for further expansion with additional research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore leadership strategies federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce. I conducted semistructured face-to-face interviews with three managers from one federal government agency within the metro area of Atlanta, Georgia to obtain data and to answer the central research question: What leadership strategies do federal managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce to enhance productivity? Participants were selected based upon their experience managing a multigenerational workforce. One interview took place in a conference room, while the two other interviews occurred in participants' enclosed offices at their request. The specified locations were private and no one could hear the conversations take place. The interviews did not require the entire hour that was notated in the letter of consent. Participants responded to eight semistructured interview questions (see Appendix B) focused strategies federal government managers use to engage their multigenerational workforce. I performed member checking and methodological triangulation to ensure data saturation. Section 3 includes a brief overview of the study. This section also includes: (a) presentation of findings, (b) applications to professional practice, (c) implications for social change, (d) recommendations for action, (e) recommendations for further research, (f) reflections, and (g) conclusion.

Presentation of the Findings

The central research question for this doctoral study was: What leadership strategies do federal managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce to enhance productivity? Data collection included semistructured interviews, document review, and journaling/notetaking during interviews. The themes that emerged included: (a) generational differences, (b) strategies for dealing with multigenerational differences, and (c) strategies for engaging multigenerational workforce. To answer the central research question, the conceptual framework for this study consisted of the employee engagement theory and the generational cohort theory. The theories aligned with the literature and themes I discovered in the findings for this qualitative single case study.

Emergent Theme 1: Generational Differences

The first theme that emerged from the data is generational differences. The secondary theory for this doctoral study is Straus and Howe's (1991) generational cohort theory. As notated in the literature review section, the premise of the generational cohort theory is individuals living during a similar period in time result in sharing a similarity of feelings, thoughts, and actions (Chi et al., 2013; Strauss & Howe, 1991). The use of this theory provided an understanding regarding generational differences that exists within a multigenerational workforce. Generational differences are a direct result of the existence of the different generations in the workforce. Work values, preferences, expectations, perceptions, and behaviors of each generation are similar in nature due to the period of time of their upbringing (Kian et al., 2013).

In line with the previous definitions of generational cohort theory and the data obtained from the participants, employees within the same generation shared similar characteristics. Managers described same generation employees as possessing similar attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives. M1 stated Baby Boomers attitudes and reactions are more vocal and defiant than other generations. M1 explained by saying:

> Baby Boomers a little older than I am…just their attitudes about and reactions to certain decisions and circumstances in the workplace. When this particular person (Baby Boomer) didn’t agree with a situation, they were more vocal and kind of defiant, almost in their remarks.

M3 agreed that Baby Boomers like to be heard and get their point across. M3 explained that older generations do not thrive on attention but they do want to be acknowledged and given developmental and advancement opportunities. M1 explained that while Baby Boomers are vocal, they tend to share information.

> Older people are more willing to share their thoughts about their work, projects we have to do. What will work, what won’t work. It’s based on their experience because they’ve been in the workforce longer.

Baby Boomers years of experience in the workforce can be a contributing factor to their vocal reputation.

M1 and M3 described Millennials as appearing less vocal than other generations. M1 elaborated by saying:

> Some of the younger people…Millennials…seem to be less verbal. One Millennial I supervised didn't ask many questions. I would have to make sure I say things like "if you have any issues or questions about what you're supposed to do, just make sure you let me know."

M1 went on to say, "they didn't initiate a lot of conversation." M1 appreciated how Millennials were more compliant by following instructions without any disagreements than the other generations. M1 included that Millennials are very talented and more technical than other generations and can contribute greatly to the work environment. M1 stated, "Millennials are very computer literate and their computer skills are very apparent and visible in the workplace." M1 did suggest that Millennials verbal skills can be improved to be a little more vocal and to speak up about any ideas they may have. M2 stated clarification is requested from Millennials due to their unique communication style. Sometimes their verbiage is not as clear or understandable as M2 would like for them to be.

The participants did not have much to say regarding Generation Xers. M3 was the only participant that expressed sentiments of Generation Xers. M3 stated Generation Xers are kind of vocal at times and are often quick to speak out and get their opinions across. M3 expressed how "Generation X speak their mind…definitely want to get their point across and are not shy."

M1 described challenges with attitudes and perspectives, while M2 acknowledged encountering challenges dealing with different personalities, backgrounds, and ideas from the different generations. M2 has also had challenges being flexible as it pertains to the interaction of the employees because of the generational differences that exist. M3 compared employees with family members regarding generational challenges. Family members and employees who were in the same generation shared similar similarities and differences. M3 stated the ability to interact with employees is in direct correlation with the interaction with family members.

Training material consisted of online training courses and access to an online library of books. The participants also discussed yearly training events/conferences the organization sponsored for management and the employees that included topics on different generations. Training material included information on diversity and different generations. Diversity training incorporated information on people of different backgrounds including ethnicity, cultural, sexual orientation, and generational. The generational information included the years encompassing each generation, characteristics and traits of each generation, and some basic differences for each generation. Participants did express how onsite training has been previously provided on generational differences, preferences, and dynamics.

The findings of this theme align with Strauss and Howe's (1991) generational cohort theory regarding individuals within the same generation share similar work values, preferences, expectations, perceptions, and behaviors. Baby Boomers shared similar behaviors such as being defiant and more vocal but requiring less attention. Baby Boomers expected acknowledgement, in addition to developmental and advancement opportunities. An observation of the Millennials resulted in this generation sharing being less vocal, more complaint, and very technologically advanced. Generation Xers shared being somewhat vocal and wanting to be heard. The knowledge regarding the different generation's characteristics enabled an awareness of the generational differences.

Emergent Theme 2: Strategies for Multigenerational Differences

The second theme that emerged was strategies to use for multigenerational differences. Strauss and Howe's (1991) generational cohort theory provided the basis for this theme by yielding an understanding of each of the generations. Acquiring the knowledge of the generations also exposes the differences that exist among the generations. The acquisition of knowledge of each generation and understanding the existence of generational differences within the workforce can aide in the development of strategies to better handle multigenerational differences. The ability to understand the concept surrounding an issue can better enable possible resolutions (Oore, Leiter, & LeBlanc, 2015). Increasing one's knowledge of generational characteristics and differences can aide in determining how to manage a multigenerational workforce (Barron et al., 2014).

All three participants stated the organization provides training and information on different generations in the workforce including generational differences, generational preferences, and team dynamics. The training material included access to online courses, a library of books, and yearly conferences. Although participants were not given specific strategies to use to handle their multigenerational workforce, they did have the opportunity to use various tools provided to create their own strategies.

The organization provided employees and managers with opportunities to participate in personality tests (DISC and Myers-Briggs) to get to know themselves better as well as share their information with coworkers to get to know their coworkers better. Organization diversity, unconscious bias, human relation based topics help employees better understand one another and create a sense of cohesion. M1 shared how the sharing of information “helps us become more collaborative and effective as a team.” The participants were happy to express how the strategies have worked well because everyone seem to work well together due to understanding one another. Hernaus and Vokic (2014) supported activities that create a sense of cohesion and promote teamwork. Lyons and Kuron (2014) agreed that promoting teamwork can aid in alleviating gaps caused by generational differences. M3 included that senior leadership encourages yearly refresh training for managerial employees on supervisory training, i.e. conflict management, encouraging employee engagement, and diversity.

M1 emphasized the importance of sharing tasks and goals and often requesting employees input prior to making final determinations ensuring the final product is timely and of good quality. Leadership communication is essential when ensuring information is disseminated appropriately (Lindsay et al., 2014). M1 offered additional strategies including the often use of mediation skills to resolve multigenerational differences due to any conflicts that arise and the implementation of using spreadsheets for the tracking of projects and assignments.

M2 explained additional strategies including encouraging employees to express their feelings. M2 also meets with the individually, on a regular basis to discuss work related issues and anything else the employees would like to discuss. M2 stated "you have to make time to talk to employees. This makes them feel appreciated." Senior level management are invited to team monthly meetings. M2 described how senior level management have implemented the incorporation of monthly town hall meetings and yearly meetings for the entire business line to come together in Atlanta into their business plan. Interest is shown in incorporating employees' ideas and concerns.

M3 strategies included the importance of thinking about your approach prior to the implementation of it because how one person handles issues can be different from how someone else handles similar issues. M3 incorporates round table discussions – allowing one person at a time to speak and voice their ideas, concerns, and/or possible resolutions. M3 incorporates acquired facilitation skills to engage employees in discussions and projects. M3 mentioned facilitators were brought in for team building exercises and discussions on strengths and weaknesses transpired to create cohesion among the group. M3's ability to take learning based upon being around family members belonging to the different generations and apply it to the work setting were beneficial to the workgroup.

The findings of this theme align with Strauss and Howe's (1991) generational cohort theory due to the strategies used that are based upon the understanding of generations and generational differences that exists. The participants accessed training material given to them, as well as online personality tests to gain a better understanding of one another. The incorporation of employees input and effective communication enabled the participants to promote a positive work environment. The strategies the participants used enabled them to better manage their multigenerational workforce. The ability to understand the concept surrounding an issue can better enable possible resolutions.

Emergent Theme 3: Strategies for Engaging Multigenerational Workforce

The third theme that emerged was strategies for engaging multigenerational workforce. The primary theory of this doctoral study is Kahn's (1990) employee engagement theory. Employee engagement is the direct result of how actively involved employees are with their work duties and responsibilities and within the organization (Kahn, 1990). The use of this theory provided an understanding regarding engaging employees. Participants discussed several strategies they have used to engage their multigenerational workforce.

All three participants expressed the importance of open and effective communication between managers and employees. Management's ability to develop and implement employee engagement strategies encourages communication opportunities (Carmeli, Dutton, & Hardin, 2015). M1 described the impact of effective communication and how it can determine the outcome of any situation. M1 stated positive, effective communication results in positive outcomes while negative communication can result in negative outcomes. Effective communication from leadership drives employee engagement (Bakker, 2014; Bedarker & Pandita, 2014). M2 expressed the importance of good communication skills and keeping the lines of communication open between management and employees. Effective communication techniques between management and employees improve employee engagement (Lindsay et al., 2014) and can build trust among team members (Gross, 2016). M2 engages the team by being a good listener and open and honest with them and encourages them to be open and honest with one another as well. M2 explained that you should listen "to get an understanding of who you're dealing with because this will help your approach in how you talk to people." This strategy ensures employees issues and concerns are heard. M2 stated "be frank, straight to the point, and truthful in your communication with employees." This results in employees being more engaged and creates a sense of cohesion among the employees as well as the employee and management.

M3 discussed the importance of communicating the organization's mission, vision, and goals to the employees. Communicating these elements ensures everyone is on one accord. Communicating goals and visions are essential in a team (Matthews & McLees, 2015). M3 has one-on-one meetings with employees to obtain their insights on how effective they think their manager is, what they think can be done better, their thoughts or ideas on their career plans, etc. M3 stated:

> We are actually having conversations on how we can work better as a team; how can I help them with their job, communicating more, or on projects. They provide constructive feedback to me on how I can be more of an effective leader.

One participant developed and implemented their own strategy for engaging a multigenerational workforce. M1 developed inclusion training which include principles of human relations training to help everyone understand conflict management and resolution and employee engagement. M1 created the Respect See Value Purpose (RSVP) philosophy. Respect one another. See the Value in one another and the work that everyone does. Have a mutual purpose. M1 shared how useful the model has been in engaging multigenerational workforce. M1 provided a brochure explaining the RSVP philosophy. Other engagement strategies M1 has used included mediation skills and giving employees the opportunity to come up with end products/resolutions on their own with an emphasis on it being timely and of exceptional quality.

Communication, collaboration, teamwork, and leadership are necessary for organizational success (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2016). M3's strategies include incorporating items from the Employee Viewpoint Survey and employee meetings into an action plan to better their areas. M3 tries to foster a family oriented atmosphere and emphasizes an open door policy so employees can freely discuss any issues and concerns. M3 also has one-on-one meetings with employees to obtain their insights on how effective they think their manager is, what they think can be done better, their thoughts or ideas on their career plans, etc. A tracking program was implemented which encouraged the participation of all employees and allowed each member to act as lead on various assignments and projects. M3 also mentioned how all program areas are brought together on a yearly basis so everyone can collaborate with one another. Giving employees the opportunity to learn what others are doing enables them to do a better job because they are enlightened on how what they do affects others or contributes to the outcome. The organization encourages employees to serve on a voluntary team that solicits and incorporates employee ideas that would better the organization.

Online training courses and online books provided information on employee engagement, working with different generations, Millennials, effective communication, conflict resolution, and team dynamics. Information specifically related to strategies to engage a multigenerational workforce was not provided in any of the online training course material or the online library of books. Participants reiterated how they took information from various sources and tailored it to work for their individual workgroups.

The findings of this theme aligned with Kahn's (1990) employee engagement theory due to strategies used based upon understanding engaging employees. The participants used strategies that encourage effective communication, an environment of collaboration and teamwork, and access to training materials. Kleinhans, Chakradhar, Muller, and Waddill (2015) stressed the importance of improving productivity and engagement by incorporating strategies involving communication, teamwork, and training. The ability to incorporate strategies to engage their multigenerational workforce has provided the participants with a positive work environment.

Applications to Professional Practice

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore leadership strategies federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce. As different generations continue to comprise the workforce, generational differences will continue to exist as a direct result of the workforce's composition (Lewis & Wescott, 2017). Obtaining the knowledge to understand the multigenerational workforce and generational differences will allow management to implement the appropriate leadership strategies to increase employee engagement, thus improving organizational performance and productivity (Lawton & Carols Tasso, 2016; Moore, Everly, & Bauer, 2016). Understanding employee engagement strategies are prevalent to the success of the federal government. It is important to understand the significance of the relationship between employee engagement in the workplace and productivity (Longoni, Golini, & Cagliano, 2014). The understanding of this relationship is important because employee engagement is the determining factor of productivity levels within an organization (Saks & Gruman, 2014b).

Based on the central research question and the analysis of interview responses and company information, I identified three main themes in Section 3. The main themes included: (a) generational differences, (b) strategies for dealing with multigenerational differences, and (c) strategies for engaging multigenerational workforce. The identification of the three themes assisted in the documentation of strategies managers are using to engage their multigenerational workforce. The findings are important to improving business practices due to the disclosure of strategies managers are currently using to engage their multigenerational workforce that have been successful for them.

Organizations should continue to implement policies, practices, training, and development to increase knowledge on generational differences (Amayah & Gedro, 2014; Cates et al., 2013). The increased knowledge on generational differences will enable managers to determine how best to engage their employees coupled with the development of activities and programs to bring generations together can create a sense of cohesion and synergy. The three participants were all in agreement with providing training and information on generational differences to managers and employees to provide a better understanding of one another. M1 suggested the importance of sharing tasks and goals to enable the employees to provide their feedback before final decision making occurs. M2 emphasized the importance of open and honest communication that is constant and consistent. M3 stressed the importance of reiterating the core values and alternating project leads for assignments. M1 and M3 both incorporate mediation and facilitation skills they have obtained whenever those skills are necessary. Participants can be creative and innovative by developing their own training material like participant M1. As previously mentioned, M1 created the RSVP philosophy. These strategies the participants use to engage their employees can encourage teamwork and collaboration, provide a flexible work environment and developmental opportunities. Employees who feel as if they are part of a team may feel encouraged to produce quality work and complete the assignment in a timely manner. The implementation of the most effective strategies is the determining factor of whether managers will be successful in engaging their multigenerational workforce.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change from this study may include providing federal government managers with the framework for understanding its multigenerational workforce by encouraging a positive work relationship that may affect and improve relationships with their coworkers, families, and communities. Employees want to feel understood and may less likely talk negatively about their managers and organization to other coworkers, their families, and members of the community if they obtain understanding. The first step to solving a problem, is acknowledging one exists. Acknowledging differences exist among the generations and finding solutions to resolve those differences could prove beneficial to all parties. Staying abreast on multigenerational training material and providing managers and employees with the necessary training can provide a clearer understanding of generational differences and possible strategies.

Social change may also include the potential to increase employee morale and motivation by engaging them thus decreasing employee turnover and potentially the unemployment rate. Low morale and motivation have the potential to cause employees to leave an organization (Islam & Ahmed, 2014), which can contribute to the unemployment rate if the employee spends any time not working upon leaving the organization. Employee engagement strategies including solicitation of ideas and rotation of the lead role in important assignments and projects can improve morale and increase motivation. The sustainability of an organization is dependent upon its employee engagement strategies (Carmeli, Dutton, & Hardin, 2015). The framework for understanding a multigenerational workforce and potential to increase morale and motivation could encourage a positive work relationship between the employee and their managers, thus creating a positive work environment for the organization.

Recommendations for Action

Most organizations thrive on improving employee engagement and productivity. With the workforce being comprised of four generations, the strategies the participants shared could prove beneficial to anyone interested in improving employee engagement and productivity. My recommendations for action include sharing the participants' various strategies to help organizations engage their multigenerational workforce.

There are times when the unknown can cause dissention in the workplace. The first strategy to implement is training on the multigenerational workforce including differences, preferences, and any other pertinent information can help all generations learn more about one another. A second strategy to implement is effective communication. Constant and consistent communication is essential in any successful relationship. Managers will need to provide clear, open, and honest communication with employees to ensure everyone knows what is expected of them and is on the same accord to have a successful relationship with their multigenerational workforce.

Another strategy to implement is to provide employees with developmental and advancement opportunities to enable and encourage career progression. Allow younger generations to shadow and/or be mentored by older generations so both generations can learn more about one another. Organizations can benefit from soliciting employees for their employee engagement ideas because they can express what may interest them and what may work for them. Sometimes the best ideas come from within. Managers should research innovative ways to engage employees. Thinking outside the norm may present many opportunities for employee engagement. Today's economic conditions might not afford a small organization with the means to sponsor a day of no work, perhaps an evening or weekend outing to an event such as laser tag or miniature golf may create cohesion among the employees through the camaraderie.

The findings of this study may be disseminated via professional and organization conferences and training, and any business-related events and forums. I plan to contact the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), the Federal Executive Review Board (FEB), and a few other organizations to discuss presenting the findings of this study to their members and participants at conferences and training sessions. My study will be published in the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database for public review and use. I will also provide the participants with a copy of this study.

Recommendations for Further Research

The recommendations for further research include exploring a variety of other business sectors, perhaps compare public sector versus private sector. I further recommend expanding the geographic area. The focus of my study was metro Atlanta, Georgia. The inclusion of the entire state of Georgia or the southeast region may provide more information. I further recommend increasing the sample size to obtain additional strategies managers may use, as well as the variety of generational managers interviewed.

I recommend inquiring about the socioeconomic backgrounds of the participants. Socioeconomic factors i.e. income, education, and occupation could have played a role in participants' responses regarding decisions they have made in the workforce. Another recommendation would be exploring various ethnicities because different ethnic backgrounds may have encountered different experiences in their upbringing that may affect their decisions in the workforce and responses during the interview. I would recommend ensuring the same number of males and females participate because males and females may endure different experiences resulting in answers reflecting those experiences. My final recommendation is to ensure representation from participants with a variety of length of service (number of years worked). The older generations tend to have more years of service and experience working with other generations than the younger generations (Becton et al., 2014).

Reflections

The Walden University - Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Program has been a rewarding and challenging experience. In the beginning, I did not realize the commitment and dedication this program entailed. I began to feel overwhelmed and discouraged. My daughters, colleagues, and professors provided the necessary encouragement for me to stay motivated and focused. I have obtained an increased knowledge in employee engagement and multigenerational workforce. I have obtained more in depth research skills including collecting and interpreting data. Having strived to obtain this prestigious degree, my research will not stop here. I will continue to conduct research on employee engagement and multigenerational workforce and include various aspects that affect both topics. I would like the opportunity to collaborate with other researchers, enter academia, and explore consulting.

Conclusion

The collaboration of a multigenerational workforce can prove beneficial to an organization if the different generations are understood and engaged. Productivity and employee engagement could very well increase as different generations are understood and engaged. The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies federal government managers use to engage a multigenerational workforce.

Organizations should provide managers and employees with generational training so everyone can learn about one another. Improvement usually occurs when individuals have a better understanding of issues or areas where there was once a lack of knowledge. There are four generations in the workforce; therefore, the organization can benefit by providing its employees with knowledge regarding the different generations, their characteristics, work values, expectations, perceptions, and differences.

Managers should provide employees with open and honest communication that is constant and consistent. Being a good listener and allowing individuals to be open and honest on an ongoing basis are factors that can promote a positive relationship. Effective communication is essential in any successful relationship and can improve employee engagement and productivity.

It is important to incorporate team building activities within departments as well as the organization in its entirety. Team building activities allow coworkers to get to know their counterparts better, as well as those in other departments. Team building activities also create a sense of cohesion and synergy among the employees in the organization, thus increasing employee engagement and productivity.

Managers are responsible for exploring strategies to determine which ones will be the most effective. The strategies used within this study may serve as a framework for federal government managers regarding strategies they can use to engage a multigenerational workforce. Federal managers can expound upon these strategies to implement strategies that will engage their respective employees, thus increasing productivity.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

1. I will ask the participant for permission to turn on the digital recording device. If the participant agrees, then I will verbally notate the date, time, and location; and take any notes I deem necessary and proceed to #2.
2. If the participant disagrees, then I will not turn on the digital recording device. I will attempt to find out why and see if the participant wishes to continue with the interview process. If not, I will end the session and thank the participant for their time.
3. The interview will begin with greetings and introductions. "*My name is Schnarda R. Robinson. I am a Doctoral student at Walden University studying Organizational Leadership. Thank you for your time and participation in my doctoral study. I really do appreciate it! The total time for this interview should not exceed 1 hour.*"
4. If the participant agrees to continue with the interview but not with the recording device, I will tell them *"Thank you (participant's name), I respect your decision to not record the interview. However, I will need to take notes to record your responses. We may need additional time to ensure I accurately capture your responses. Are you still willing to participate?"*
5. Study participants will have previously read the informed consent form and provided their verbal consent agreeing to participate in the study during interview scheduling. Before asking any questions, each participant will have to sign a hard

copy of the consent confirming their participation in the study. Participants will maintain a hard copy of the consent form for their personal records.

6. I will thank each participant for agreeing to participate in the study upon signing the consent form.
7. I will guarantee confidentiality to each participant and ensure the disclosure of any personally identifiable information will not exist within the study.
8. I will announce the coded information for each participant e.g. “M1” on the recording, notate it on the signed consent form, and begin asking questions.
9. I will allow each participant the necessary time to answer each interview question (Appendix D). I will synthesize each participant’s response and read it back to him or her to ensure I have accurately captured his or her response.
10. After asking all interview questions and the participant confirms they do not have any additional information to discuss, I will inform each participant they will receive a copy of the synthesized transcript and will have the opportunity to review it for accuracy, sign it and return it to me confirming their acceptance of the synthesis.
11. I will thank participants for their time, cooperation, and participation in the study.
12. I will stop taking notes and turn off the digital recording device.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. Would you classify yourself as a Traditionalist (1922 - 1944), Baby Boomer (1945 - 1964), Generation Xer (1965 - 1980), or Millennial (1981 - 2000)?
2. What challenges have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
3. What strategies have you implemented to overcome these challenges?
4. What generational differences have you encountered managing a multigenerational workforce?
5. What organizational strategies have you implemented as a result of generational differences?
6. What organizational strategies has your organization implemented as a result of generational differences?
7. What strategies have you implemented that engage your multigenerational workforce?
8. Is there anything else you would like to include that we have not discussed?